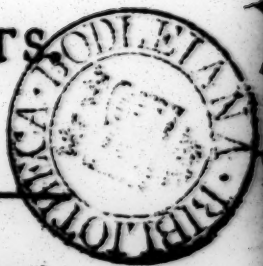


T H E
B E E.

B E I N G
E S S A Y S

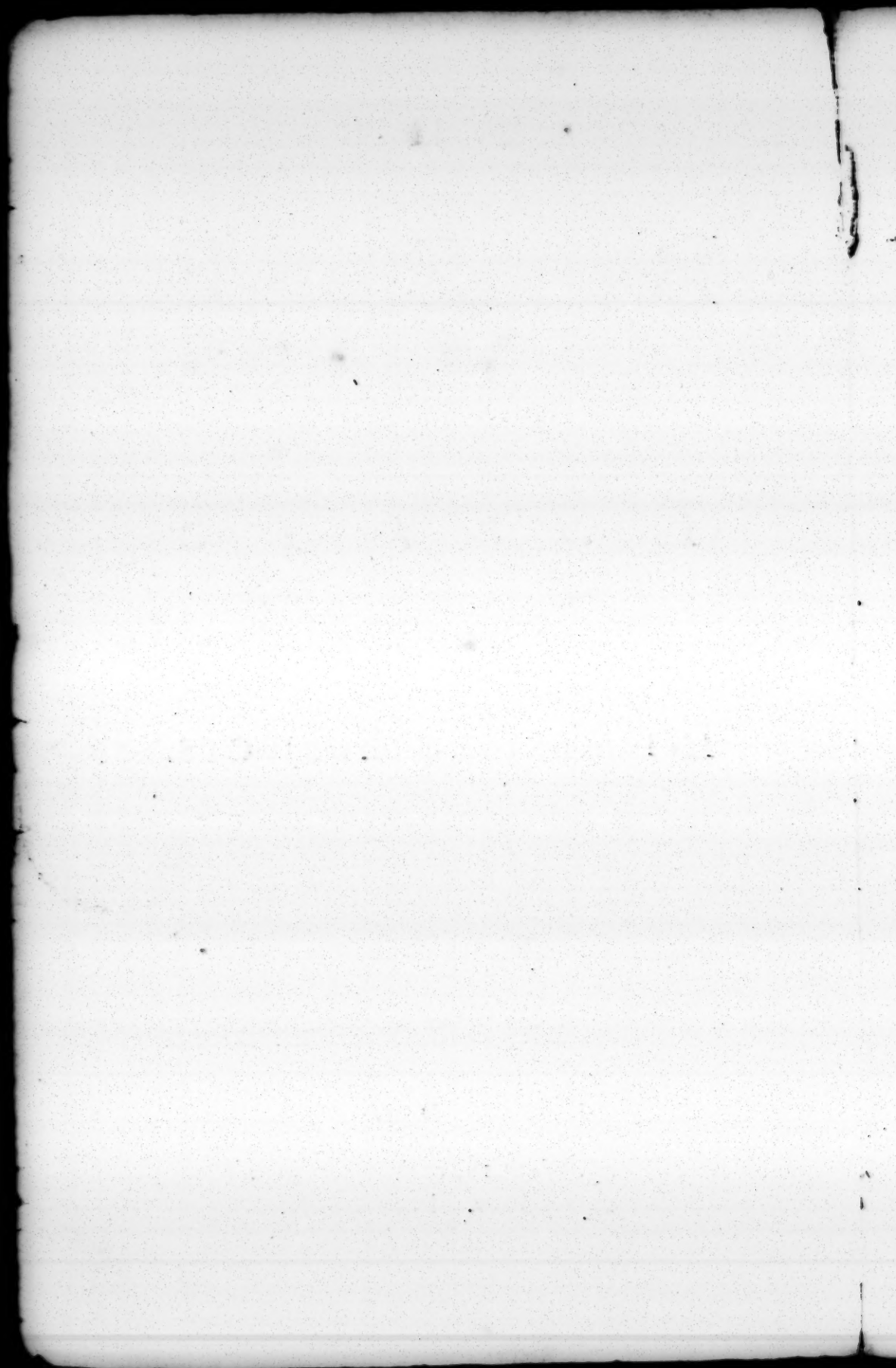
ON THE MOST
INTERESTING SUBJECTS



*Floriferis ut Apes in saltibus omnia libant,
Omnia Nos itidem.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WILKIE, at the *Bible*, in *St. Paul's*
Church-Yard. MDCCCLIX.

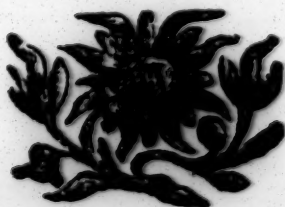


CONTENTS.

I NTRODUCTION	Page 1
<i>Remarks on our Theatres</i>	9
<i>Epigram on a beautiful Youth struck blind with</i>	
<i>Lightning. Imitated from the Spanish</i>	8
<i>Another on the same Subject</i>	ibid
<i>The Story of ALCANDER and SEPTIMIUS.</i>	
<i>Translated from a Byzantine Historian</i>	15
<i>A Letter from Mr. VOLTAIRE to M.</i>	
<i>D'ARGET, of Laufanne</i>	22
<i>A Letter from a Traveller</i>	26
<i>A short Account of the late Mr. MAUPERTUIS</i>	38
<i>On Drefs</i>	33
<i>Some Particulars relating to CHARLES XII.</i>	
<i>not commonly known</i>	42
<i>The Gift. To IRIS, in Bow Street, Covent</i>	
<i>Garden</i>	50
<i>Happinefs in a great Measure dependant on</i>	
<i>Constitution</i>	51
<i>On our Theatres</i>	57
<i>A Letter from M. VOLTAIRE to M. TIRIOT</i>	61
<i>On the Use of Language</i>	65
<i>The History of HYPASIA</i>	75
<i>On Juftice and Generofity</i>	81
<i>On Wit. By Mr. VOLTAIRE</i>	87
<i>A Sonnet</i>	94
<i>Some Particulars relating to Father FREJIO</i>	95
<i>Mifcellaneous</i>	97
<i>A Flemifh Tradition</i>	105
<i>The Sagacity of fome Infefts</i>	111
<i>The Characteristics of Greatnefs</i>	119
<i>A City</i>	

CONTENTS.

<i>A City Night-Piece</i>	Page 124
<i>An Elegy on that Glory of her Sex, Mrs. MARY</i>	
BLAIZE	128
<i>On Political Frugality</i>	129
<i>A Refuerie</i>	145
<i>A Word or two on the late Farce, called High</i>	
Life Below Stairs	154
<i>On Unfortunate Merit</i>	157
<i>On Education</i>	161
<i>On the Contradictions of the World. From</i>	
VOLTAIRE	178
<i>On the Instability of Worldly Grandeur</i>	184
<i>Some Account of the Academies of Italy</i>	190
<i>Of Eloquence</i>	193
<i>Custom and Laws compared</i>	207
<i>Of the Pride and Luxury of the middling Class</i>	
of People	212
SABINUS and OLINDA	215
<i>The Sentiments of a Frenchman on the Temper</i>	
of the English	220
<i>On Deceit and Falshood</i>	225
<i>An Account of the Augustan Age of England</i>	235
<i>Of the Opera in England</i>	248





The B E E.

NUMBER I.

SATURDAY, *October* 6, 1759.

INTRODUCTION.



HERE is not, perhaps, a more whimsically dismal figure in nature, than a man of real modesty who assumes an air of impudence; who, while his heart beats with anxiety, studies ease, and affects good humour. In this situation, however, a periodical writer often finds himself, upon his first attempt to address the public in form. All his power of pleasing is damped by solicitude, and his cheerfulness dashed with apprehension. Impressed with the terrors of the tribunal before which he is going to appear, his natural humour turns to pert-

B

ness,

2 INTRODUCTION.

ness, and for real wit he is obliged to substitute vivacity. His first publication draws a crowd, they part dissatisfied, and the author, never more to be indulged a favourable hearing, is left to condemn the indelicacy of his own address, or their want of discernment.

For my part, as I was never distinguished for address, and have often even blundered in making my bow, such bodings as these had like to have totally repressed my ambition. I was at a loss whether to give the public specious promises, or give none; whether to be merry or sad on this solemn occasion. If I should modestly decline all merit, it was too probable the hasty reader might have taken me at my word. If, on the other hand, like labourers in the Magazine trade, I had, with modest impudence, humbly presumed to promise an epitome of all the good things that ever were said or written, this might have disgusted those readers I most desire to please. Had I been merry, I might have been censured as *vastly low*; and had I been sorrowful, I might have been left to mourn in solitude and silence: In short, which ever way I turned, nothing presented but prospects of terror, despair, chandlers shops, and waste paper.

In this debate between fear and ambition, my publisher happening to arrive, interrupted for a
4 while,

INTRODUCTION. 3

while my anxiety. Perceiving my embarrassment about making my first appearance, he instantly offered his assistance and advice: "You must know, sir, says he, that the republic of letters is at present divided into three classes. One writer, for instance, excels at a plan, or a title-page, another works away the body of the book, and a third is a dab at an index. Thus a Magazine is not the result of any single man's industry; but goes through as many hands as a new pin, before it is fit for the public. I fancy, sir, continues he, I can provide an eminent hand, and upon moderate terms, to draw up a promising plan to smooth up our readers a little, and pay them, as colonel Charteris paid his seraglio, at the rate of three halfpence in hand, and three shillings more in promises."

He was proceeding in his advice, which, however, I thought proper to decline, by assuring him, that as I intended to pursue no fixed method, so it was impossible to form any regular plan; determined never to be tedious, in order to be logical, wherever pleasure presented, I was resolved to follow. Like the BEE, which I had taken for the title of my paper, I would rove from flower to flower, with seeming inattention, but concealed choice, expatiate over all the beauties of the season, and make my industry my amusement.

INTRODUCTION.

This reply may also serve as an apology to the reader, who expects, before he sits down, a bill of his future entertainment. It would be improper to pall his curiosity by lessening his surprize, or anticipate any pleasure I am able to procure him, by saying what shall come next. Thus much, however, he may be assured of, that neither war nor scandal shall make any part of it. Homer finely imagines his deity turning away with horror from the prospect of a field of battle, and seeking tranquility among a nation noted for peace and simplicity. Happy could any effort of mine, but for a moment, repress that savage pleasure some men find in the daily accounts of human misery! How gladly would I lead them from scenes of blood and altercation, to prospects of innocence and ease, where every breeze breaths health, and every sound is but the echo of tranquility.

But whatever the merit of his intentions may be, every writer is now convinced that he must be chiefly indebted to good fortune for finding readers willing to allow him any degree of reputation. It has been remarked, that almost every character which has excited either attention or praise, has owed part of its success to merit, and part to an happy concurrence of circumstances in its favour. Had Cæsar or Cromwell exchanged countries, the one might have been a serjeant, and the other an exciseman. So it is with wit, which generally succeeds

INTRODUCTION. 5

succeeds more from being happily addressed, than from its native poignancy. A *bon mot*, for instance, that might be relished at White's, may lose all its flavour when delivered at the Cat and bagpipes in St. Giles's. A jest calculated to spread at a gaming-table, may be received with a perfect neutrality of face should it happen to drop in a mackrel-boat. We have all seen dunces triumph in some companies, where men of real humour were disregarded, by a general combination in favour of stupidity. To drive the observation as far as it will go, should the labours of a writer who designs his performances for readers of a more refined appetite fall into the hands of a devourer of compilations, what can he expect but contempt and confusion. If his merits are to be determined by judges who estimate the value of a book from its bulk, or its frontispiece, every rival must acquire an easy superiority, who with persuasive eloquence promises four extraordinary pages of *letter press*, or three beautiful prints, curiously coloured from nature.

But to proceed ; though I cannot promise as much entertainment, or as much elegance as others have done, yet the reader may be assured he shall have as much of both as I can. He shall, at least, find me alive while I study his entertainment ; for I solemnly assure him, I was never yet

6 INTRODUCTION.

possessed of the secret at once of writing and sleeping.

During the course of this paper, therefore, all the wit and learning I have, are heartily at his service ; which if, after so candid a confession he should, notwithstanding, still find intolerably dull, low, or sad stuff, this I protest is more than I know. I have a clear conscience, and am entirely out of the secret.

Yet I would not have him, upon the perusal of a single paper, pronounce me incorrigible ; he may try a second, which, as there is a studied difference in subject and style, may be more suited to his taste ; if this also fails, I must refer him to a third, or even to a fourth, in case of extremity : If he should still continue refractory, and find me dull to the last, I must inform him, with Bays in the Rehearsal, that I think him a very odd kind of a fellow, and desire no more of his acquaintance.

It is with such reflections as these I endeavour to fortify myself against the future contempt or neglect of some readers, and am prepared for their dislike by mutual recrimination. If such should impute dealing neither in battles nor scandal to me as a fault, instead of acquiescing in their censure, I must beg leave to tell them a story.

A

INTRODUCTION. 7

A traveller, in his way to Italy, happening to pass at the foot of the Alps, found himself at last in a country where the inhabitants had each a large excrescence depending from the chin, like the pouch of a monkey. This deformity, as it was endemic, and the people little used to strangers, it had been the custom, time immemorial, to look upon as the greatest ornament of the human visage. Ladies grew toasts from the size of their chins, and none were regarded as pretty fellows, but such whose faces were broadest at the bottom. It was Sunday, a country church was at hand, and our traveller was willing to perform the duties of the day. Upon his first appearance at the church door, the eyes of all were naturally fixed upon the stranger; but what was their amazement, when they found that he actually wanted that emblem of beauty, a pursed chin. This was a defect that not a single creature had sufficient gravity (though they were noted for being grave) to withstand. Stifled bursts of laughter, winks, and whispers circulated from visage to visage, and the prismatic figure of the stranger's face was a fund of infinite gaiety; even the parson, equally remarkable for his gravity and chin, could hardly refrain joining in the good humour. Our traveller could no longer patiently continue an object for deformity to point at. Good folks, said he, I perceive that I am the unfortunate cause of all this good humour. It is true, I may

8 INTRODUCTION.

have faults in abundance, but I shall never be induced to reckon my want of a swelled face among the number.

On a beautiful YOUTH struck blind with
Lightning.

Imitated from the SPANISH.

SURE 'twas by Providence design'd,
Rather in pity, than in hate,
That he should be, like Cupid, blind,
To save him from Narcissus' fate.

ANOTHER. In the same spirit.

LUMINE Acon dextro capta est Leonida sinistro
Et poterat forma vincere uterque Deos.
Parve puer lumen quod habes concede puellæ
Sic tu cæcus amor sic erit illa Venus.

REMARKS

R E M A R K S

O N O U R

T H E A T R E S.

OUR theatres are now opened, and all Grubstreet is preparing its advice to the managers; we shall undoubtedly hear learned disquisitions on the structure of one actor's legs, and another's eye-brows. We shall be told much of enunciations, tones and attitudes, and shall have our lightest pleasures commented upon by didactic dullness. We shall, it is feared, be told, that Garrick is a fine actor, but then, as a manager, so avaricious! That Palmer is a most promising genius, and Holland likely to do well, in a particular cast of character. We shall have them giving Shuter instructions to amuse us by rule, and deploring over the ruins of desolated Majesty in Covent-Garden. As I love to be advising too, for advice is easily given, and bears a shew of wisdom and superiority, I must be permitted to offer a few observations upon our theatres and actors, without, on this trivial occasion, throwing my thoughts into the formality of method.

There

There is something in the deportment of all our players infinitely more stiff and formal than among the actors of other nations. Their action sits uneasy upon them; for as the English use very little gesture in ordinary conversation, our English-bred actors are obliged to supply stage gestures by their imagination alone. A French comedian finds proper models of action in every company and in every coffee-house he enters. An Englishman is obliged to take his models from the stage itself; he is obliged to imitate nature from an imitation of nature. I know of no set of men more likely to be improved by travelling than those of the theatrical profession. The inhabitants of the continent are less reserved than here; they may be seen through upon a first acquaintance; such are the proper models to draw from; they are at once striking, and are found in great abundance.

Though it would be inexcusable in a comedian to add any thing of his own to the Poet's dialogue, yet as to action he is entirely at liberty. By this he may shew the fertility of his genius, the poignancy of his humour, and the exactness of his judgment; we scarce see a coxcomb or a fool in common life, that has not some peculiar oddity in his action. These peculiarities it is not in the power of words to represent, and depend solely upon the actor. They give a relish to the humour
of

of the poet, and make the appearance of nature more illusive ; the Italians, it is true, mask some characters, and endeavour to preserve the peculiar humour by the make of the mask ; but I have seen others still preserve a great fund of humour in the face without a mask ; one actor, particularly, by a squint which he threw into some characters of low life, assumed a look of infinite solidity. This, though upon reflection we might condemn, yet, immediately, upon representation, we could not avoid being pleased with. To illustrate what I have been saying by the plays I have of late gone to see : In the *Miser* which was played a few nights ago at Covent-Garden, Love-gold appears through the whole in circumstances of exaggerated avarice ; all the player's action, therefore, should conspire with the poet's design, and represent him as an epitome of penury. The French comedian, in this character, in the midst of one of his most violent passions, while he appears in an ungovernable rage, feels the demon of avarice still upon him, and stoops down to pick up a pin, which he quilts into the flap of his coat-pocket with great assiduity. Two candles are lighted up for his wedding ; he flies, and turns one of them into the socket ; it is, however, lighted up again ; he then steals to it, and privately crams it into his pocket. The *Mock-Doctor* was lately played at the other house. Here again the comedian had an opportunity of heightening the ridicule

cule by action. The French player sits in a chair with an high back, and then begins to shew away by talking nonsense, which he would have thought latin by those whom he knows do not understand a syllable of the matter. At last he grows enthusiastic, enjoys the admiration of the company, tosses his legs and arms about, and in the midst of his raptures and vociferation, he and the chair fall back together. All this appears dull enough in the recital, but the gravity of Cato could not stand it in the representation. In short, there is hardly a character in comedy to which a player of any real humour, might not add strokes of vivacity that could not fail of applause. But instead of this we too often see our fine gentlemen do nothing through a whole part, but strut, and open their snuff-box; our pretty fellows sit indecently with their legs across, and our clowns pull up their breeches. These, if once, or even twice repeated, might do well enough; but to see them served up in every scene, argues the actor almost as barren as the character he would expose.

The magnificence of our theatres is far superior to any others in Europe where plays only are acted. The great care our performers take in painting for a part, their exactness in all the minutiae of dress, and other little scenical proprieties, have been taken notice of by Ricoboni, a gentleman of Italy, who travelled Europe with

no other design but to remark upon the stage ; but there are several apparent improprieties still continued, or lately come into fashion. As, for instance, spreading a carpet punctually at the beginning of the death scene, in order to prevent our actors from spoiling their cloaths ; this immediately apprizes us of the tragedy to follow ; for laying the cloth is not a more sure indication of dinner than laying the carpet of bloody work at Drury-Lane. Our little pages also with unmeaning faces, that bear up the train of a weeping princess, and our aukward lords in waiting, take off much from her distress. Mutes of every kind divide our attention, and lessen our sensibility ; but here it is entirely ridiculous, as we see them seriously employed in doing nothing. If we must have dirty-shirted guards upon the theatres, they should be taught to keep their eyes fixed on the actors, and not roll them round upon the audience, as if they were ogling the boxes.

Beauty methinks seems a requisite qualification in an actress. This seems scrupulously observed elsewhere, and for my part I could wish to see it observed at home. I can never conceive an hero dying for love of a lady totally destitute of beauty. I must think the part unnatural, for I cannot bear to hear him call that face angelic ; when even paint cannot hide its wrinkles. I must condemn him of stupidity, and the person whom

I can accuse for want of taste will seldom become the object of my affections or admiration. But if this be a defect, what must be the entire perversion of scenical decorum, when for instance we see an actress that might act the Wapping Landlady without a bolster, pining in the character of Jane Shore, and while unwieldy with fat endeavouring to convince the audience that she is dying with hunger.

For the future then, I could wish that the parts of the young or beautiful were given to performers of suitable figures; for I must own, I could rather see the stage filled with agreeable objects, though they might some times bungle a little, than see it crowded with withered or misshapen figures, be their emphasis, as I think it is called, ever so proper. The first may have the awkward appearance of new-raised troops, but in viewing the last, I cannot avoid the mortification of fancying myself placed in an hospital of invalids.

(15)

THE
S T O R Y
O F
ALCANDER and SEPTIMIUS.

Translated from a
BYZANTINE HISTORIAN.

ATHENS, even long after the decline of the Roman empire, still continued the seat of learning, politeness and wisdom. The emperors and the generals, who in these periods of approaching ignorance, still felt a passion for science, from time to time, added to its buildings, or encreased its professorships. Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, was of the number; he repaired those schools which barbarity was suffering to fall into decay, and continued those pensions to men of learning, which avaricious governors had monopolized to themselves.

In this city, and about this period, Alcander and Septimius were fellow students together. The
one

one the most subtle reasoner of all the Lyceum; the other the most eloquent speaker in the academic grove. Mutual admiration soon begot an acquaintance, and a similitude of disposition made them perfect friends. Their fortunes were nearly equal, their studies the same, and they were natives of the two most celebrated cities in the world; for Alcander was of Athens, Septimius came from Rome.

In this mutual harmony they lived for some time together, when Alcander, after passing the first part of his youth in the indolence of philosophy, thought at length of entering into the busy world, and as a step previous to this, placed his affections on Hypatia, a lady of exquisite beauty. Hypatia shewed no dislike to his addresses: The day of their intended nuptials was fixed, the previous ceremonies were performed, and nothing now remained but her being conducted in triumph to the apartment of the intended bridegroom.

An exultation in his own happiness, or his being unable to enjoy any satisfaction without making his friend Septimius a partner, prevailed upon him to introduce his mistress to his fellow student, which he did with all the gaiety of a man who found himself equally happy in friendship and love. But this was an interview fatal to the

the

the future peace of both. Septimius no sooner saw her, but he was smit with an involuntary passion. He used every effort, but in vain, to suppress desires at once so imprudent and unjust. He retired to his apartment in inexpressible agony; and the emotions of his mind in a short time became so strong, that they brought on a fever, which the physicians judged incurable.

During this illness, Alcander watched him with all the anxiety of fondness, and brought his mistress to join in those amiable offices of friendship. The sagacity of the physicians, by this means soon discovered the cause of their patient's disorder; and Alcander being apprized of their discovery, at length extorted a confession from the reluctant dying lover.

It would but delay the narrative to describe the conflict between love and friendship in the breast of Alcander on this occasion; it is enough to say, that the Athenians were at this time arrived to such refinement in morals, that every virtue was carried to excess. In short, forgetful of his own felicity, he gave up his intended bride, in all her charms, to the young Roman. They were married privately by his connivance, and this unlooked-for change of fortune wrought as unexpected a change in the constitution of the now happy Septimius. In a few days he was perfectly
G recovered,

recovered, and set out with his fair partner for Rome. Here, by an exertion of those talents which he was so eminently possessed of, he in a few years arrived at the highest dignities of the state, and was constituted the city judge, or prætor.

Mean while Alcander not only felt the pain of being separated from his friend and his mistress, but a prosecution was also commenced against him by the relations of Hypatia, for his having basely given her up, as was suggested, for money. His innocence of the crime laid to his charge, or his eloquence in his own defence, were not able to withstand the influence of a powerful party.

He was cast and condemned to pay an enormous fine. Unable to raise so large a sum at the time appointed, his possessions were confiscated, himself stripped of the habit of freedom, exposed in the market-place, and sold as a slave to the highest bidder.

A merchant of Thrace becoming his purchaser, Alcander, with some other companions of distress, was carried into the region of desolation and sterility. His stated employment was to follow the herds of an imperious master, and his skill in hunting was all that was allowed him to supply a precarious subsistence. Condemned to
hopeless

hopeless servitude every morning, waked him to a renewal of famine or toil, and every change of season served but to aggravate his unsheltered distress. Nothing but death or flight was left him, and almost certain death was the consequence of his attempting to fly. After some years of bondage, however, an opportunity of escaping offered; he embraced it with ardour, and travelling by night, and lodging in caverns by day, to shorten a long story, he at last arrived in Rome. The day of Alcander's arrival, Septimius sat in the forum administering justice; and hither our wanderer came, expecting to be instantly known, and publicly acknowledged. Here he stood the whole day among the crowd, watching the eyes of the judge, and expecting to be taken notice of, but so much was he altered by a long succession of hardships, that he passed entirely without notice; and in the evening, when he was going up to the prætor's chair, he was brutally repulsed by the attending lictors. The attention of the poor is generally driven from one ungrateful object to another. Night coming on, he now found himself under a necessity of seeking a place to lie in, and yet knew not where to apply. All emaciated, and in rags as he was, none of the citizens would harbour so much wretchedness, and sleeping in the streets might be attended with interruption or danger: In short, he was obliged to take up his lodging in

one of the tombs without the city, the usual retreat of guilt, poverty or despair.

In this mansion of horror, laying his head upon an inverted urn, he forgot his miseries for a while in sleep, and virtue found, on this flinty couch, more ease than down can supply to the guilty.

It was midnight, when two robbers came to make this cave their retreat, but happening to disagree about the division of their plunder, one of them stabbed the other to the heart, and left him weltering in blood at the entrance. In these circumstances he was found next morning, and this naturally induced a further enquiry. The alarm was spread, the cave was examined, Alcander was found sleeping, and immediately apprehended and accused of robbery and murder. The circumstances against him were strong, and the wretchedness of his appearance confirmed suspicion. Misfortune and he were now so long acquainted, that he at last became regardless of life. He detested a world where he had found only ingratitude, falsehood and cruelty, and was determined to make no defence. Thus lowering with resolution; he was dragged, bound with cords, before the tribunal of Septimius. The proofs were positive against him, and he offered nothing in his own vindication; the judge, therefore, was proceeding

proceeding to doom him to a most cruel and ignominious death, when, as if illumined by a ray from heaven, he discovered, through all his misery, the features, though dim with sorrow, of his long lost, lov'd Alcander. It is impossible to describe his joy and his pain on this strange occasion. Happy in once more seeing the person he most loved on earth, distressed at finding him in such circumstances. Thus agitated by contending passions, he flew from his tribunal, and falling on the neck of his dear benefactor, burst into an agony of distress. The attention of the multitude was soon, however, divided by another object. The robber, who had been really guilty, was apprehended selling his plunder, and, struck with a panic, confessed his crime. He was brought bound to the same tribunal, and acquitted every other person of any partnership in his guilt. Need the sequel be related? Alcander was acquitted, shared the friendship and the honours of his friend Septimius, lived afterwards in happiness and ease, and left it to be engraved on his tomb, *That no circumstances are so desperate, which providence may not relieve.*

A

L E T T E R

FROM

Mr. V O L T A I R E,

T O

Mr. D' A R G E T, of LAUSANNE.

YOU demand, my dear friend and companion of Pötsdam, in what manner * P...hus and † Cineas have been reconciled. First, then, Pyrrhus turned my tragedy of Merope into an opera, which he sent me. Again he was so kind as to offer me his key, which, however, will not serve to open Paradise; and to this he added an offer of all his favours; but I am too old to accept of the favours of kings at present. To one of his sisters, who has ever preserved a friendship for me, I am obliged for these marks of kindness. To her I owe the correspondence which is now and then renewed between the heroic, poetical, warlike, singular, brilliant, proud, mo-

* K. of Prussia. † M. de Voltaire.

A LETTER from M. VOLTAIRE, &c. 23
deft king, and Cineas the Swifs, retired from the
world to happinefs.

Would you be fo good as to pay us a fhort vifit
in this part of the world, I fancy we could fpend
the time agreeably enough ; the world does not
afford a finer profpect than that from one of my
windows. Imagine a canal on one fide, that
lengthens out of fight, bordered by an hundred
gardens ; on the other, the vaft Genevan lake,
like a boundlefs mirrour, reflects the mountains
on the oppofite fide, that lift themfelves above
the clouds, in form of the moft magnificent am-
phitheatre ; and then I am fo fuitied with an
houfe, I feel no inconvenience except from flies
in the midft of winter. Madame Dennis has
fhewed the elegance of her tafte in the furniture.
We live here much more comfortably than
Pyrrhus, and I fancy fare better too, when we
have a good appetite ; without this, neither Pyr-
hus nor Cineas can be happy.

We acted a tragedy yefterday ; if you chufe
to take a part, you have only to come to be fitted.
In this manner we forget the quarrels of kings
and of men of letters, thofe frightful, thefe ri-
diculous ! We have had a premature account of
a battle between Marfhal Richelieu and the Prince
of Brunfwick. I know not whether the Prince
can fucceed, for it is certain I have won fifty guineas

24 A LETTER from M. VOLTAIRE,

from him at chess. However, it is possible to lose at chess, and win at a game where people play with thirty thousand bayonets.

I grant you that the king of Prussia may have some foibles, but no body understands the game he is playing better than he. He has infinite dispatch, and his troops have been disciplined long before he came to command them. It is an easy matter to conceive how regular machines must behave, who have long been used to war, who see their sovereign at their head, who are personally known to him, and whom he exhorts with his hat in his hand to do their duty. Drole fellows these at a platoon, at handling their cartridges, and firing six or seven times in a minute. Yet with all this dexterity their master lately thought that all was lost. About three months ago he was disposed to die; he bid me adieu both in verse and prose, but he is now quite recovered. By his discipline and dispatch he has gained two great battles in the space of a month. He flies to the French, turns back upon the Austrians, retakes Breslau, takes forty thousand prisoners of war, and makes epigrams. We shall see how this bloody tragedy, so pathetic, and yet so complicated, will end.

Happy they, who, with an eye of tranquility, can behold these great events of the best of possible

to M. D'ARGET.

25

fible systems. As for the affair of the Abbe Prade, I have yet been able to receive no authentic information. Fame says he is hanged; but she knows not what she says. I should be sorry that all the king's readers should come to an unhappy end.

Your's, &c.

Jan. 8, 1758.

VOLTAIRE.



A LET-

A

L E T T E R

FROM A

T R A V E L L E R.

(The sequel of this correspondence to be continued occasionally. I shall alter nothing either in the stile or substance of these letters, and the reader may depend on their being genuine.)

My dear WILL, Cracow, Aug. 2, 1758.

YOU see, by the date of my letter, that I am arrived in Poland. When will my wanderings be at an end? When will my restless disposition give me leave to enjoy the present hour? When at Lyons, I thought all happiness lay beyond the Alps; when in Italy, I found myself still in want of something, and expected to leave solitude behind me by going into Romelia, and now you find me turning back, still expecting ease every where but where I am. It is now seven years since I saw the face of a single creature

A LETTER from a TRAVELLER. 27

ture who cared a farthing whether I was dead or alive. Secluded from all the comforts of confidence, friendship, or society, I feel the solitude of an hermit, but not his ease.

The prince of *** has taken me in his train, so that I am in no danger of starving for this bout. The prince's governor is a rude ignorant pedant, and his tutor a battered rake : thus, between two such characters you may imagine he is finely instructed. I made some attempts to display all the little knowledge I had acquired by reading or observation ; but I find myself regarded as an ignorant intruder. The truth is, I shall never be able to acquire a power of expressing myself with ease in any language but my own ; and out of my own country the highest character I can ever acquire, is that of being a philosophic vagabond.

When I consider myself in the country which was once so formidable in war, and spread terror and desolation over the whole Roman empire, I can hardly account for the present wretchedness and pusillanimity of its inhabitants ; a prey to every invader ; their cities plundered without an enemy ; their magistrates seeking redress by complaints, and not by vigour. Every thing conspires to raise my compassion for their miseries, were not my thoughts too busily engaged by my own. The whole

28 A LETTER from a TRAVELLER.

whole kingdom is in strange disorder ; when our equipage, which consists of the prince and thirteen attendants, had arrived at some towns, there were no conveniences to be found, and we were obliged to have girls to conduct us to the next. I have seen a woman travel thus on horseback before us for thirty miles, and think herself highly paid, and make twenty reverences, upon receiving, with ecstasy, about two-pence for her trouble. In general we were better served by the women than the men on those occasions. The men seemed directed by a low sordid interest alone ; they seemed mere machines, and all their thoughts were employed in the care of their horses. If we gently desired them to make more speed, they took not the least notice ; kind language was what they had by no means been used to. It was proper to speak to them in the tones of anger, and sometimes it was even necessary to use blows, to excite them to their duty. How different these from the common people of England, whom a blow might induce to return the affront sevenfold. These poor people, however, from being brought up to vile usage, lose all the respect which they should have for themselves. They have contracted an habit of regarding constraint as the great rule of their duty. When they were treated with mildness, they no longer continued to perceive a superiority. They fancied themselves our equals, and a continuance of our humanity might probably have rendered

A LETTER from a TRAVELLER. 29

rendered them insolent ; but the imperious tone, menaces, and blows at once changed their sensations and their ideas : their ears, and their shoulders taught their souls to shrink back into servitude, from which they had for some moments fancied themselves disengaged.

The enthusiasm of liberty an Englishman, feels is never so strong as when presented by such prospects as these. I must own, in all my indigence, it is one of my comforts, (perhaps, indeed, it is my only boast) that I am of that happy country ; tho' I scorn to starve there ; tho' I do not choose to lead a life of wretched dependance, or be an object for my former acquaintance to point at. While you enjoy all the ease and elegance of prudence and virtue, your old friend wanders over the world, without a single anchor to hold by, or a friend, except you, to confide in.

Your's, &c.



A

SHORT ACCOUNT

Of the late

Mr. MAUPERTUIS.

MR. Maupertuis, lately deceased, was the first to whom the English philosophers owed their being particularly admired by the rest of Europe. The romantic system of Des Cartes was suited to the taste of the superficial and the indolent; the foreign universities had embraced it with ardour, and such are seldom convinced of their error 'till all others give up such false opinions as untenable. The philosophy of Newton, and the metaphysics of Locke appeared, but, like all new truths, they were at once received with opposition and contempt. The English, 'tis true, studied, understood, and consequently admired them; it was very different on the continent. Fontenelle, who seemed to preside over the republic of letters, unwilling to acknowledge that all his life had been spent in erroneous philosophy, joined in the universal disapprobation, and the English philosophers seemed entirely unknown.

Maupertuis, however, made them his study; he thought he might oppose the physics of his country,
and

A short Account of Mr. MAUPERTUIS. 31

and yet still be a good citizen ; he defended our countrymen, wrote in their favour, and, at last, as he had truth on his side, carried his cause. Almost all the learning of the English, 'till very lately, was conveyed in the language of France. The writings of Maupertius spread the reputation of his master Newton, and by an happy fortune have united his fame with that of our human prodigy.

The first of his performances, openly, in vindication of the Newtonian system, is his treatise entitled, *Sur la figure des Astres*, if I remember right ; a work at once expressive of a deep geometrical knowledge, and the most happy manner of delivering abstruse science with ease. This met with violent opposition from a people, though fond of novelty in every thing else, yet, however, in matters of science, attached to antient opinions with bigotry. As the old and the obstinate fell away, the youth of France embraced the new opinions, and now seem more eager to defend Newton than even his countrymen.

That oddity of character which great men are sometimes remarkable for, Maupertuis was not entirely free from. If we can believe Voltaire, he once attempted to castrate himself ; but whether this be true or no, it is certain he was extremely whimsical. Though born to a large fortune,
when

32 A short Account of Mr. MAUPERTUIS.

when employed in mathematical enquiries, he disregarded his person to such a degree, and loved retirement so much, that he has been more than once put on the list of modest beggars by the curates of Paris, when he retired to some private quarter of the town, in order to enjoy his meditations without interruption. The character given of him by one of Voltaire's antagonists, if it can be depended upon, is much to his honour. You says this writer to Mr. Voltaire, You, were entertained by the king of Prussia as a buffoon, but Maupertuis as a philosopher. It is certain that the preference which this royal scholar gave to Maupertuis was the cause of Voltaire's disagreement with him. Voltaire could not bear to see a man, whose talents he had no great opinion of, preferred before him as president of the royal academy. His *Micromegas* was designed to ridicule Maupertuis; and probably it has brought more disgrace on the author than the subject. Whatever absurdities men of letters have indulged, and how fantastical soever the modes of science have been, their anger is still more subject to ridicule.



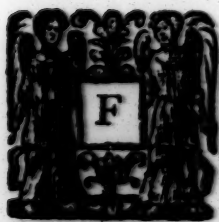


The B E E.

NUMBER II.

SATURDAY, *October* 13, 1759.

On D R E S S.



FOREIGNERS observe that there are no ladies in the world more beautiful, or more ill dressed than those of England. Our countrywomen have been compared to those Pictures, where the face is the work of a Raphael; but the draperies thrown out by some empty pretender, destitute of taste, and entirely unacquainted with design.

If I were a poet, I might observe, on this occasion, that so much beauty set off with all the advantages of dress, would be too powerful an

D

an-

antagonist for the opposite sex, and therefore it was wisely ordered, that our ladies should want taste, lest their admirers should entirely want reason.

But to confess a truth, I do not find they have a greater aversion to fine cloaths than the women of any other country whatsoever. I can't fancy that a shopkeeper's wife in Cheapside has a greater tenderness for the fortune of her husband than a citizen's wife in Paris; or that miss in a boarding-school is more an oeconomist in dress than mademoiselle in a nunnery.

Although Paris may be accounted the soil in which almost every fashion takes its rise, its influence is never so general there as with us. They study there the happy method of uniting grace and fashion, and never excuse a woman for being awkwardly dressed, by saying her cloaths are made in the mode. A French woman is a perfect architect in dress; she never, with Gothic ignorance, mixes the orders; she never tricks out a squabby Doric shape, with Corinthian finery; or, to speak without metaphor, she conforms to general fashion, only when it happens not to be repugnant to private beauty.

Our ladies, on the contrary, seem to have no other standard for grace but the run of the town. If fashion gives the word, every distinction of
2 beauty,

beauty, complexion, or stature ceases. Sweeping trains, Prussian bonnets, and trollopees, as like each other, as if cut from the same piece, level all to one standard. The mall, the gardens, and playhouses are filled with ladies in uniform, and their whole appearance shews as little variety or taste as if their cloaths were bespoke by the colonel of a marching regiment, or fancied by the same artist who dresses the three battalions of guards.

But not only ladies of every shape and complexion, but of every age too, are possessed of this unaccountable passion of dressing in the same manner. A lady of no quality can be distinguished from a lady of some quality only by the redness of her hands; and a woman of sixty, masked, might easily pass for her grand-daughter. I remember, a few days ago, to have walked behind a damsel, tossed out in all the gaiety of fifteen; her dress was loose, unstudied, and seemed the result of conscious beauty. I called up all my poetry on this occasion, and fancied twenty Cupids prepared for execution in every folding of her white negligee. I had prepared my imagination for an angel's face; but what was my mortification to find that the imaginary goddess was no other than my cousin Hannah, four years older than myself, and I shall be sixty-two the twelfth of next November.

After the transports of our first salute were over, I could not avoid running my eye over her whole appearance. Her gown was of cambrick, cut short before, in order to discover an high-heeled shoe, which was buckled almost at the toe. Her cap, if cap it might be called that cap was none, consisted of a few bits of cambrick, and flowers of painted paper stuck on one side of her head. Her bosom, that had felt no hand, but the hand of time, these twenty years, rose, suing, but in vain, to be pressed. I could, indeed, have wished her more than an handkerchief of Paris-net to shade her beauties; for, as Tasso says of the rosebud, *Quanto si mostra men tanto piu bella*, I should think her's most pleasing when least discovered.

As my cousin had not put on all this finery for nothing, she was at that time falling out to the park, when I had overtaken her. Perceiving, however, that I had on my best wig, she offered, if I would 'squire her there, to send home the footman. Though I trembled for our reception in public, yet I could not, with any civility, refuse; so, to be as gallant as possible, I took her hand in my arm, and thus we marched on together.

When we made our entry at the Park, two antiquated figures, so polite and so tender as we seemed to be, soon attracted the eyes of the company. As we made our way among crowds who
were

were out to shew their finery as well as we, wherever we came I perceived we brought good-humour in our train. The polite could not forbear smiling, and the vulgar burst out into a horse laugh at our grotesque figures. Cousin Hannah, who was perfectly conscious of the rectitude of her own appearance, attributed all this mirth to the oddity of mine; while I as cordially placed the whole to her account. Thus, from being two of the best-natured creatures alive, before we got half way up the mall, we both began to grow peevish, and, like two mice on a string, endeavoured to revenge the impertinence of others upon ourselves. “I am
“amazed, cousin Jeffery, says miss, that I can
“never get you to dress like a Christian. I knew
“we should have the eyes of the Park upon us,
“with your great wig so frizzed, and yet so
“beggary, and your monstrous muff. I hate
“those odious muffs.” I could have patiently borne a criticism on all the rest of my equipage; but, as I had always a peculiar veneration for my muff, I could not forbear being piqued a little; and throwing my eyes with a spiteful air on her bosom,
“I could heartily wish, madam, replied I, that, for
“your sake, my muff was cut into a tippet.”

As my cousin, by this time, was grown heartily ashamed of her gentleman usher, and as I was never very fond of any kind of exhibition myself, it was

mutually agreed to retire, for a while, to one of the seats, and from that retreat, remark on others as freely as they had remarked on us.

When seated we continued silent for some time, employed in very different speculations. I regarded the whole company now passing in review before me, as drawn out merely for my amusement. For my entertainment the beauty had all that morning been improving her charms, the beau had put on lace, and the young doctor a big wig, merely to please me. But quite different were the sentiments of cousin Hannah; she regarded every well-dressed woman as a victorious rival, hated every face that seemed dressed in good humour, or wore the appearance of greater happiness than her own. I perceived her uneasiness, and attempted to lessen it, by observing that there was no company in the Park to-day. To this she readily assented; "and yet, says she, it is full enough of scrubs of one kind or another." My smiling at this observation gave her spirits to pursue the bent of her inclination, and now she began to exhibit her skill in secret history, as she found me disposed to listen. "Observe, says she to me, that old woman in tawdry filk, and dressed out even beyond the fashion. That is Miss Biddy Evergreen. Miss Biddy, it seems, has money, and as she considers that money was never so scarce as it is now, she seems resolved to keep what she has to herself. She is
"ugly

“ ugly enough. you see ; yet, I assure you, she
 “ has refused several offers, to my own know-
 “ ledge, within this twelvemonth, Let me see,
 “ three gentlemen from Ireland who study the law,
 “ two waiting captains, her doctor, and and a
 “ Scotch preacher, who had like to have car-
 “ ried her off. All her time is passed between
 “ sickness and finery. Thus she spends the whole
 “ week in a close chamber, with no other com-
 “ pany but her monkey, her apothecary, and cat,
 “ and comes dressed out to the Park every Sunday,
 “ to shew her airs, to get new lovers, to catch a
 “ new cold, and to make new work for the
 “ doctor.

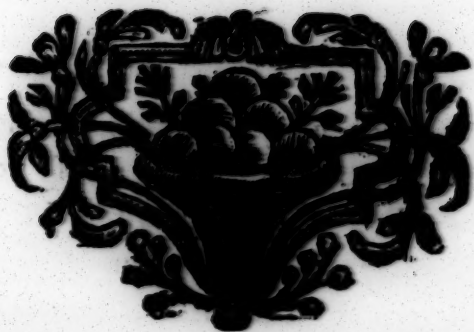
“ There goes Mrs. Roundabout, I mean the
 “ fat lady in the lutestring trollopee. Between
 “ you and I, she is but a cutler’s wife. See how
 “ she’s dressed as fine as hands and pins can make
 “ her, while her two marriageable daughters,
 “ like bunters, in stuff gowns, are now taking
 “ sixpennyworth of tea at the White-conduit-
 “ house. Odious pufs, how she waddles along,
 “ with her train two yards behind her ! She puts
 “ me in mind of my lord Bantam’s Indian sheep,
 “ which are obliged to have their monstrous tails
 “ trundled along in a go-cart. For all her airs,
 “ it goes to her husband’s heart to see four yards
 “ of good lutestring wearing against the ground,
 “ like one of his knives on a grindstone. To

“ speak my mind, cousin Jeffery, I never liked
“ those tails; for suppose a young fellow should
“ be rude, and the lady should offer to step back
“ in a fright, instead of retiring, she treads upon
“ her train, and falls fairly on her back; and
“ then you know, cousin,—her cloaths may be
“ spoiled.

“ Ah! miss Mazzard! I knew we should not
“ miss her in the Park; she in the monstrous
“ Prussian bonnet. Miss, though so very fine,
“ was bred a milliner, and might have had some
“ custom if she had minded her business; but
“ the girl was fond of finery, and instead of dress-
“ ing her customers, laid out all her goods in
“ adorning herself. Every new gown she put on
“ impaired her credit; she still, however, went
“ on, improving her appearance, and lessening
“ her little fortune, and is now, you see, become
“ a belle and a bankrupt.”

My cousin was proceeding in her remarks, which were interrupted by the approach of the very lady she had been so freely describing. Miss had perceived her at a distance, and approached to salute her. I found, by the warmth of the two ladies protestations, that they had been long intimate esteemed friends and acquaintance. Both were so pleased at this happy rencounter, that they were resolved not to part for the day. So we all crossed the Park together, and I saw

them into a hackney coach at the gate of St. James's. I could not, however, help observing,
*That they are generally most ridiculous themselves,
who are apt to see most ridicule in others.*



SOME

SOME
PARTICULARS
RELATIVE TO
CHARLES XII.

Not commonly known.

S I R,

Stockholm,

I Cannot resist your sollicitations, though it is possible I shall be unable to satisfy your curiosity. The polite of every country seem to have but one character. A gentleman of Sweden differs but little, except in trifles, from one of any other country. It is among the vulgar we are to find those distinctions which characterize a people, and from them it is that I take my picture of the Swedes.

Though the Swedes in general appear to languish under oppression, which often renders others wicked, or of malignant dispositions, it has not, however, the same influence upon them, as they are faithful, civil, and incapable of atrocious crimes.

crimes. Would you believe that in Sweden highway robberies are not so much as heard of; for my part I have not in the whole country seen a gibbet or a gallows. They pay an infinite respect to their ecclesiastics, whom they suppose to be the privy counsellors of providence, who, on their part, turn this credulity to their own advantage, and manage their parishioners as they please. In general, however, they seldom abuse their sovereign authority. Harkened to as oracles, regarded as the dispensers of eternal rewards and punishments, they readily influence their hearers into justice, and make them practical philosophers without the pains of study.

As to their persons they are perfectly well made, and the men particularly have a very engaging air. The greatest part of the boys which I saw in the country, had very white hair. They were as beautiful as Cupids, and there was something open and entirely happy in their little chubby faces. The girls, on the contrary, have neither such fair, nor such even complexions, and their features are much less delicate, which is a circumstance different from that of almost every other country. Besides this, it is observed that the women are generally afflicted with the itch, for which Scania is particularly remarkable. I had an instance of this in one of the inns on the road. The hostess was one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen;

seen; she had so fine a complexion, that I could not avoid admiring it. But what was my surprize when she opened her bosom in order to suckle her child, to perceive that seat of delight, all covered with this disagreeable distemper. The careless manner in which she exposed to our eyes so disgusting an object, sufficiently testifies that they regard it as no very extraordinary malady, and seem to take no pains to conceal it. Such are the remarks, which probably you may think trifling enough, I have made in my journey to Stockholm, which, to take it all together, is a large, beautiful, and even populous city.

The arsenal appears to me one of its greatest curiosities; it is an handsome spacious building, but however illy stored with the implements of war. To recompence this defect, they have almost filled it with trophies, and other marks of their former military glory. I saw there several chambers filled with Danish, Saxon, Polish, and Russian standards. There was at least enough to suffice half a dozen armies; but new standards are more easily made than new armies can be enlisted. I saw, besides, some very rich furniture, and some of the crown jewels of great value, but what principally engaged my attention, and touched me with passing melancholy, were the bloody, yet precious spoils, of the two greatest heroes the north ever produced. What I mean
are

are the cloaths in which the great Gustavus Adolphus, and the intrepid Charles XII. died, by a fate not usual to kings. The first, if I remember, is a sort of a buff waistcoat, made antique fashion, very plain, and without the least ornaments; the second, which was even more remarkable, consisted only of a coarse blue cloth coat, a large hat of less value, a shirt of coarse linen, large boots, and buff gloves made to cover a great part of the arm. His saddle, his pistols and his sword, have nothing in them remarkable, the meanest foldier was in this respect no way inferior to his gallant monarch. I shall use this opportunity to give you some particulars of the life of a man already so well known, which I had from persons who knew him when a child, and who now, by a fate not unusual to courtiers, spend a life of poverty and retirement, and talk over in raptures all the actions of their old victorious king, companion and master.

Courage and inflexible constancy formed the basis of this monarch's character. In his tenderest years he gave instances of both. When he was yet scarce seven years old, being at dinner with the queen his mother, intending to give a bit of bread to a great dog he was fond of, this hungry animal snapt too greedily at the morsel, and bit his hand in a terrible manner. The wound bled copiously, but our young hero, without

without offering to cry, or taking the least notice of his misfortune, endeavoured to conceal what had happened, lest his dog should be brought into trouble, and wrapped his bloody hand in the napkin. The queen perceiving that he did not eat, asked him the reason. He contented himself with replying, that he thanked her, he was not hungry. They thought he was taken ill, and so repeated their solicitations. But all was in vain, though the poor child was already grown pale with the loss of blood. An officer who attended at table, at last perceived it ; for Charles would sooner have died than betrayed his dog, whom he knew intended no injury.

At another time, when in the small pox, and his case appeared dangerous, he grew one day very uneasy in his bed, and a gentleman who watched him, desirous of covering him up close, received from the patient a violent box on his ear. Some hours after observing the prince more calm, he entreated to know how he had incurred his displeasure, or what he had done to have merited a blow. A blow, replied Charles, I don't remember any thing of it ; I remember, indeed, that I thought myself in the battle of Arbela, fighting for Darius, where I gave Alexander a blow, which brought him to the ground.

What

What great effects might not these two qualities of courage and constancy have produced, had they at first received a just direction. Charles, with proper instruction, thus naturally disposed, would have been the delight and the glory of his age. Happy those princes, who are educated by men who are at once vertuous and wise, and have been for some time in the school of affliction ; who weigh happiness against glory, and teach their royal pupils the real value of fame ; who are ever shewing the superior dignity of man to that of royalty ; that a peasant who does his duty is a nobler character than a king of even middling reputation. Happy, I say, were princes, could such men be found to instruct them, but those to whom such an education is generally intrusted, are men who themselves have acted in a sphere too high to know mankind. Puffed up themselves with ideas of false grandeur, and measuring merit by adventitious circumstances of greatness, they generally communicate those fatal prejudices to their pupils, confirm their pride by adulation, or encrease their ignorance by teaching them to despise that wisdom which is found among the poor.

But not to moralize when I only intend a Story ; what is related of the journies of this prince is no less astonishing. He has sometimes been on horseback for four and twenty hours successively,
and

and thus traversed the greatest part of his kingdom. At last none of his officers were found capable of following him; he thus consequently rode the greatest part of these journies quite alone, without taking a moment's repose, and without any other subsistence but a bit of bread. In one of these rapid courses, he underwent an adventure singular enough. Riding thus post one day, all alone, he had the misfortune to have his horse fall dead under him. This might have embarrassed an ordinary man, but it gave Charles no sort of uneasiness. Sure of finding another horse, but not equally so of meeting with a good saddle and pistols, he ungirds his horse, claps the whole equipage on his own back, and thus accoutred, marches on to the next inn, which by good fortune was not far off. Entering the stable, he here found an horse entirely to his mind; so, without further ceremony, he clapped on his saddle and housings with great composure, and was just going to mount, when the gentleman who owned the horse was apprized of a stranger's going to steal his property out of the stable. Upon asking the king, whom he had never seen, bluntly, how he presumed to meddle with his horse, Charles coolly replied, squeezing in his lips, which was his usual custom, that he took the horse because he wanted one; for you see, continued he, if I have none, I shall be obliged to carry the saddle myself. This answer did not seem at all satisfactory

factory to the gentleman, who instantly drew his sword. In this the king was not much behind hand with him, and to it they were going, when the guards, by this time, came up, and testified that surprize which was natural, to see arms in the hand of a subject against his king. Imagine whether the gentleman was less surprized than they at his unpremeditated disobedience. His astonishment, however, was soon dissipated by the king, who, taking him by the hand, assured him he was a brave fellow, and himself would take care he should be provided for. This promise was afterwards fulfilled ; and I have been assured the king made him a captain.

I am, S I R, &c.



E

T H E

(50)

THE
G I F T.

TO

IRIS, in Bow-Street, Covent-Garden.

SAY, cruel IRIS, pretty rake,
Dear mercenary beauty,
What annual offering shall I make,
Expressive of my duty.

My heart, a victim to thine eyes,
Should I at once deliver,
Say, would the angry fair one prize
The gift, who flights the giver.

A bill, a jewel, watch, or toy,
My rivals give——and let 'em.
If gems, or gold, impart a joy,
I'll give them——when I get 'em.

I'll give——but not the full-blown rose,
Or rose-bud more in fashion ;
Such short-liv'd offerings but disclose
A transitory passion.

I'll give thee something yet unpaid,
Not less sincere, than civil :
I'll give thee——Ah ! too charming maid ;
I'll give thee——To the Devil.

H A P.

H A P P I N E S S,

In a great Measure,

Dependant on CONSTITUTION.

WHEN I reflect on the unambitious retirement in which I passed the earlier part of my life in the country, I cannot avoid feeling some pain in thinking that those happy days are never to return. In that retreat all nature seemed capable of affording pleasure; I then made no refinements on happiness, but could be pleased with the most awkward efforts of rustic mirth; thought cross-purposes the highest stretch of human wit, and questions and commands the most rational amusement for spending the evening. Happy could so charming an illusion still continue. I find age and knowledge only contribute to sour our dispositions. My present enjoyments may be more refined, but they are infinitely less pleasing. The pleasure Garrick gives, can no way compare to that I have received from a country wag, who imitated a quaker's sermon. The music of Matei is dissonance to what I felt when our old dairy-maid sung me into tears with Johnny

52 Happinefs dependant on Conftitution.

Armstrong's Laft Good Night, or the Cruelty of
Barbara Allen.

Writers of every age have endeavoured to fhew that pleafure is in us, and not in the objects offered for our amufement. If the foul be happily difpofed, every thing becomes a fubject of entertainment, and diftrefs will almoft want a name. Every occurrence paffes in review like the figures of a proceffion ; fome may be aukward, others ill dressed ; but none but a fool is for this enraged with the matter of the ceremonies.

I remember to have once feen a flave in a fortification in Flanders, who appeared no way touched with his fituation. He was maimed, deformed, and chained ; obliged to toil from the appearance of day 'till night-fall, and condemned to this for life ; yet, with all thefe circumftances of apparent wretchednefs, he fung, would have danced, but that he wanted a leg, and appeared the merrieft, happieft man of all the garrifon. What a practical philofopher was here ; an happy conftitution fupplied philofophy, and though feemingly deftitute of wifdom, he was really wife. No reading or ftudy had contributed to difenchant the fairy land around him. Every thing furnifhed him with an opportunity of mirth ; and though fome thought him from his infenfibility a fool, he was fuch

such an idiot as philosophers might wish in vain to imitate.

They, who like him, can place themselves on that side of the world in which every thing appears in a ridiculous or pleasing light, will find something in every occurrence to excite their good humour. The most calamitous events, either to themselves or others, can bring no new affliction; the whole world is to them a theatre, on which comedies only are acted. All the bustle of heroism, or the rants of ambition, serve only to heighten the absurdity of the scene, and make the humour more poignant. They feel, in short, as little anguish at their own distress, or the complaints of others, as the undertaker, though dressed in black, feels sorrow at a funeral.

Of all the men I ever read of, the famous Cardinal De Retz possessed this happiness of temper in the highest degree. As he was a man of gallantry, and despised all that wore the pedantic appearance of philosophy, wherever pleasure was to be found, he was generally foremost to raise the auction. Being an universal admirer of the fair sex, when he found one lady cruel, he generally fell in love with another, from whom he expected a more favourable reception: If she too rejected his addresses, he never thought of retiring into deserts, or pining in hopeless distress. He persuaded him-

54 Happiness dependant on Constitution.

self, that instead of loving the lady, he only fancied he had loved her, and so all was well again. When fortune wore her angriest look, when he at last fell into the power of his most deadly enemy Cardinal Mazarine, and was confined a close prisoner in the castle of Valenciennes, he never attempted to support his distress by wisdom or philosophy, for he pretended to neither. He laughed at himself and his persecutor, and seemed infinitely pleased at his new situation. In this mansion of distress, though secluded from his friends, though denied all the amusements, and even the conveniencies of life, teized every hour by the impertinence of wretches who were employed to guard him, he still retained his good humour, laughed at all their little spite, and carried the jest so far as to be revenged, by writing the life of his goaler,

All that philosophy can teach, is to be stubborn or sullen under misfortunes. The Cardinal's example will instruct us to be merry in circumstances of the highest affliction. It matters not whether our good humour be construed by others into insensibility, or even idiotism; it is happiness to ourselves, and none but a fool would measure his satisfaction by what the world thinks of it.

Dick Wildgoose was one of the happiest silly fellows I ever knew. He was of the number of those

those good-natured creatures that are said to do no harm to any but themselves. Whenever Dick fell into any misery, he usually called it *seeing life*. If his head was broke by a chairman, or his pocket picked by a sharper, he comforted himself by imitating the Hibernian dialect of the one, or the more fashionable cant of the other. Nothing came amiss to Dick. His inattention to money matters had incensed his father to such a degree, that all the intercession of friends in his favour, was fruitless. The old gentleman was on his death-bed. The whole family, and Dick among the number, gathered around him. I leave my second son Andrew, said the expiring miser, my whole estate, and desire him to be frugal. Andrew, in a sorrowful tone, as is usual on these occasions, *Prayed heaven to prolong his life and health to enjoy it himself*. I recommend Simon, my third son, to the care of his elder brother, and leave him beside four thousand pounds. Ah! father, cried Simon, (in great affliction to be sure) *May heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself*. At last, turning to poor Dick; as for you, you have always been a sad dog, you'll never come to good, you'll never be rich, I'll leave you a shilling to buy an halter. Ah! father, cries Dick, without any emotion, *May heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself*. This was all the trouble the loss of fortune gave this thoughtless imprudent creature. However, the tender-

56 Happiness dependant on Constitution.

ness of an uncle recompenced the neglect of a father; and Dick is now not only excessively good-humoured, but competently rich.

The world, in short, may cry out at a bankrupt who appears at a ball; at an author who laughs at the public which pronounces him a dunce; at a general who smiles at the reproach of the vulgar, or the lady who keeps her good humour in spite of scandal; but such is the wisest behaviour they can possibly assume; it is certainly a better way to oppose calamity by dissipation, than to take up the arms of reason or resolution to oppose it: By the first method we forget our miseries, by the last we only conceal them from others; by struggling with misfortunes, we are sure to receive some wounds in the conflict. The only method to come off victorious, is by running away.



O N O U R T H E A T R E S.

MAdemoiselle Clairon, a celebrated actress at Paris, seems to me the most perfect female figure I have ever seen upon any stage. Not, perhaps, that nature has been more liberal of personal beauty to her, than some to be seen upon our theatres at home. There are actresses here who have as much of what connoisseurs call statuary grace, by which is meant elegance unconnected with motion, as she; but they all fall infinitely short of her, when the soul comes to give expression to the limbs, and animates every feature.

Her first appearance is excessively engaging; she never comes in staring round upon the company, as if she intended to count the benefits of the house, or at least to see, as well as be seen. Her eyes are always, at first, intently fixed upon the persons of the drama, and she lifts them by degrees, with enchanting diffidence, upon the spectators. Her first speech, or at least the first part of it, is delivered with scarce any motion of the arm; her hands and her tongue never set out together; but the one prepares us for the other.

other. She sometimes begins with a mute, eloquent attitude ; but never goes forward all at once with hands, eyes, head, and voice. This observation, though it may appear of no importance, should certainly be adverted to ; nor do I see any one performer (Garrick only excepted) among us, that is not, in this particular, apt to offend. By this simple beginning she gives herself a power of rising in the passion of the scene. As she proceeds, every gesture, every look acquires new violence, till at last transported, she fills the whole vehemence of the part, and all the idea of the poet.

Her hands are not alternately stretched out, and then drawn in again, as with the singing women at Sadler's-wells ; they are employed with graceful variety, and every moment please with new and unexpected eloquence. Add to this, that their motion is generally from the shoulder ; she never flourishes her hands while the upper part of her arm is motionless, nor has she the ridiculous appearance, as if her elbows were pinned to her hips.

But of all the cautions to be given our rising actresses, I would particularly recommend it to them never to take notice of the audience, upon any occasion whatsoever ; let the spectators applaud never so loudly, their praises should pass,
except

except at the end of the epilogue, with seeming inattention. I can never pardon a lady on the stage who, when she draws the admiration of the whole audience, turns about to make them a low courtesy for their applause. Such a figure no longer continues Belvidera, but at once drops into Mrs. Cibber. Suppose a sober tradesman, who once a year takes his shilling's worth at Drury-lane, in order to be delighted with the figure of a queen, the queen of Sheba for instance, or any other queen: This honest man has no other idea of the great but from their superior pride and impertinence: Suppose such a man placed among the spectators, the first figure that presents on the stage is the queen herself, courtesying and cringing to all the company; how can he fancy her the haughty favourite of king Solomon the wise, who appears actually more submissive than the wife of his bosom. We are all tradesmen of a nicer relish in this respect, and such a conduct must disgust every spectator who loves to have the illusion of nature strong upon him.

Yet, while I recommend to our actresses a skilful attention to gesture, I would not have them study it in the looking-glass. This, without some precaution, will render their action formal; by too great an intimacy with this, they become stiff and affected. People seldom improve, when they have no other model but themselves to copy after.

I re-

I remember to have known a notable performer of the other sex, who made great use of this flattering monitor, and yet was one of the stiffest figures I ever saw. I am told his apartment was hung round with looking-glass, that he might see his person twenty times reflected upon entering the room; and I will make bold to say, he saw twenty very ugly fellows whenever he did so.



(61)

A
L E T T E R
F R O M

Mr. V O L T A I R E,

T O

Mr. T I R I O T.

Monrion, near Laufanne,

March 26, 1757.

Dear SIR,

OF all the praises you are pleased to bestow on my trifling Essay on General History, I can acquiesce only in those which you mention of my impartiality, of my love of truth, and my zeal for the happiness of society. All my life has been spent in contributing to spread a spirit of philosophy and toleration, and such a spirit now seems to characterise the age. This glorious spirit, which animates every enlightened mind, has begun to diffuse itself in this country, where first my valedutinary constitution, and now the charms of tranquility keep me. It is no small example of the progress of human reason, that my History has been printed at Geneva with public approbation,

tion, in which I have characterized Calvin as a man of a disposition as much more villainous as his understanding was more enlightened than that of the rest of mankind. The death of Servetus appears still abominable. The Dutch blush when they recollect their cruelty to Barnevelt. I know not whether the English yet find any remorse for theirs to Byng. The attempt and the tortures of Damien have been objected to me as incongruous with my character of the present age. Almost every man of any figure in the literary world has demanded, Is this the nation which you have drawn in so amiable a light? Is this the age which you have described, as superior to others in wisdom? To this I answer (as I well may) that some men are of characters very different from that of their country, or the times they live in. A poor madman, of the dregs of the people, is not a model from which to characterize his country. But, on the other hand, Chatel and Ravillac were possessed with an epidemic fury, the spirit of public fanaticism turned their heads; and even so far was the age infected, that I have by me an apology for the behaviour of John Chatel, printed during the trial of this unhappy, but deluded creature. It is quite otherwise at present; Damien's attempt has been looked upon with indignation not only by France, but by all Europe.

In

Mr. VOLTAIRE, to Mr. TIRIOT. 63

In the little romantic country in which I reside, lying along the banks of the Genevan lake, we turn with horror from enormities like these. We act here as they ought to act at Paris; we live with tranquillity; we cultivate learning without divisions or envy. Tavernier observes, that the prospect of Lausanne from the Genevan lake resembles that of Constantinople; but what pleases me more than a prospect is, that love for the arts which inspires the generality of its inhabitants.

You have not been deceived when it was told you, that Zara, the Prodigal Son, and other plays, have been represented here as well as they could have been at Paris: Yet, let not this surprize you; they neither know, nor speak any other language here than that of France. Almost all the families are of French extraction; and we have as much taste here as in any part of the world.

We have not here that low ridiculous history of the war in 1741, which they have printed at Paris with my name; nor the pretended *Port feuille*, where there are scarce three sentences of mine; nor that infamous rhapsody, intituled, The Maid of Orleans, replete with lines the most low and stupid, that ever escaped from ignorance, and with insolencies the most atrocious that ever
I impudence

impudence had courage to avow. We must own that there have lately been many enormities committed at Paris, with both the dagger and the pen. I console myself, at being distant from my friends, in finding myself removed from such enormities as these ; and I must pity that amiable country which can thus produce monsters.

VOLTAIRE.





The B E E.

NUMBER III.

SATURDAY, *October* 20, 1759.

On the USE of LANGUAGE.



THE manner in which most writers begin their treatises on the Use of Language, is generally thus :
“ Language has been granted to
“ man, in order to discover his
“ wants and necessities, so as to have them re-
“ lieved by society. Whatever we desire, what-
“ ever we wish, it is but to cloath those desires
“ or wishes in words, in order to fruition ; the
“ principal use of language, therefore, say they,
“ is to exprefs our wants, so as to receive a speedy
“ redress.”

F

Such

Such an account as this may serve to satisfy grammarians and rhetoricians well enough, but men who know the world, maintain very contrary maxims ; they hold, and I think with some shew of reason, they hold, that he who best knows how to conceal his necessities and desires, is the most likely person to find redress, and that the true use of speech is not so much to express our wants as to conceal them.

When we reflect on the manner in which mankind generally confer their favours, we shall find that they who seem to want them least, are the very persons who most liberally share them. There is something so attractive in riches, that the large heap generally collects from the smaller ; and the poor find as much pleasure in encreasing the enormous mass, as the miser, who owns it, sees happiness in its encrease. Nor is there in this any thing repugnant to the laws of true morality. Seneca himself allows, that in conferring benefits, the present should always be suited to the dignity of the receiver. Thus the rich receive large presents, and are thanked for accepting them. Men of middling stations are obliged to be content with presents something less, while the beggar, who may be truly said to want indeed, is well paid if a farthing rewards his warmest solicitations.

Every

Every man who has seen the world, and has had his *ups and downs in life*, as the expression is, must have frequently experienced the truth of this doctrine, and must know that to have much, or to seem to have it, is the only way to have more. Ovid finely compares a man of broken fortune to a falling column; the lower it sinks, the greater weight it is obliged to sustain. Thus, when a man has no occasion to borrow, he finds numbers willing to lend him. Should he ask his friend to lend him an hundred pounds, it is possible, from the largeness of his demand, he may find credit for twenty; but should he humbly only sue for a trifle, it is two to one whether he might be trusted for two pence. A certain young fellow at George's, whenever he had occasion to ask his friend for a guinea, used to prelude his request as if he wanted two hundred, and talked so familiarly of large sums, that none could ever think he wanted a small one. The same gentleman, whenever he wanted credit for a new suit from his taylor, always made the proposal in laced cloaths; for he found by experience, that if he appeared shabby on these occasions, Mr. Lynch had taken an oath against trusting; or what was every bit as bad, his foreman was out of the way, and would not be at home these two days.

There can be no inducement to reveal our wants, except to find pity, and by this means relief; but

before a poor man opens his mind in such circumstances, he should first consider whether he is contented to lose the esteem of the person he solicits, and whether he is willing to give up friendship only to excite compassion. Pity and friendship are passions incompatible with each other, and it is impossible that both can reside in any breast for the smallest space, without impairing each other. Friendship is made up of esteem and pleasure; pity is composed of sorrow and contempt; the mind may for some time fluctuate between them, but it can never entertain both together.

Yet let it not be thought that I would exclude pity from the human mind. There is scarce any who are not in some degree possessed of this pleasing softness; but it is at best but a short-lived passion, and seldom affords distress more than transitory assistance: With some it scarce lasts from the first impulse till the hand can be put into the pocket; with others it may continue for twice that space, and on some of extraordinary sensibility, I have seen it operate for half an hour. But, however, last as it will, it generally produces but beggarly effects; and where, from this motive we give an halfpenny, from others we give always pound. In great distress we sometimes, it is true, feel the influence of tenderness strongly; when the same distress solicits a second time, we then feel with diminished sensibility, but like the
4
repetition

repetition of an eccho, every new impulse becomes weaker, till at last our sensations lose every mixture of sorrow, and degenerate into downright contempt.

Jack Spindle and I were old acquaintance; but he's gone. Jack was bred in a compting-house, and his father dying just as he was out of his time, left him an handsome fortune, and many friends to advise with. The restraint in which he had been brought up, had thrown a gloom upon his temper, which some regarded as an habitual prudence, and from such considerations, he had every day repeated offers of friendship. Those who had money, were ready to offer him their assistance that way; and they who had daughters, frequently, in the warmth of affection, advised him to marry. Jack, however, was in good circumstances; he wanted neither money, friends, nor a wife, and therefore modestly declined their proposals.

Some errors in the management of his affairs, and several losses in trade, soon brought Jack to a different way of thinking; and he at last thought it his best way to let his friends know that their offers were at length acceptable. His first address was therefore to a scrivener, who had formerly made him frequent offers of money and friendship, at a time when, perhaps, he knew those offers would have been refused.

Jack, therefore, thought he might use his old friend without any ceremony, and as a man confident of not being refused, requested the use of an hundred guineas for a few days, as he just then had an occasion for money. "And pray, Mr. Spindle, replied the scrivener, do you want all this money?" "Want it, Sir, says the other, if I did not want it, I should not have asked it." "I am sorry for that, says the friend; for those who want money when they come to borrow, will want money when they should come to pay. To say the truth, Mr. Spindle, money is money now-a-days. I believe it is all sunk in the bottom of the sea, for my part; and he that has got a little, is a fool if he does not keep what he has got."

Not quite disconcerted by this refusal, our adventurer was resolved to apply to another, whom he knew to be the very best friend he had in the world. The gentleman whom he now addressed, received his proposal with all the affability that could be expected from generous friendship. "Let me see, you want an hundred guineas, and pray, dear Jack, would not fifty answer." "If you have but fifty to spare, Sir, I must be contented." "Fifty to spare, I do not say that, for I believe I have but twenty about me." "Then I must borrow the other thirty from some other friend." "And pray, replied the friend, would it

“ it not be the best way to borrow the whole
 “ money from that other friend, and then one note
 “ will serve for all, you know. Lord, Mr. Spin-
 “ dle, make no ceremony with me at any time ;
 “ you know I’m your friend, and when you chuse
 “ a bit of dinner or so.—You, Tom, see the
 “ the gentleman down. You wont forget to dine
 “ with us now and then. Your very humble ser-
 “ vant.”

Distressed, but not discouraged at this treat-
 ment, he was at last resolved to find that assistance
 from love, which he could not have from friend-
 ship. Miss Jenny Dismal had a fortune in her
 own hands, and she had already made all the ad-
 vances that her sex’s modesty would permit. He
 made his proposal therefore with confidence, but
 soon perceived, *No bankrupt ever found the fair
 one kind.* Miss Jenny and Master Billy Galloon
 were lately fallen deeply in love with each other,
 and the whole neighbourhood thought it would
 soon be a match.

Every day now began to strip Jack of his former
 finery ; his cloaths flew piece by piece to the pawn-
 broker’s, and he seemed at length equipped in the
 genuine mourning of antiquity. But still he
 thought himself secure from starving, the num-
 berless invitations he had received to dine, even
 after his losses, were yet unanswered ; he was
 therefore now resolved to accept of a dinner be-

cause he wanted one; and in this manner he actually lived among his friends a whole week without being openly affronted. The last place I saw poor Jack was at the Rev. Dr. Gosling's. He had, as he fancied, just nicked the time, for he came in as the cloth was laying. He took a chair without being desired, and talked for some time without being attended to. He assured the company, that nothing procured so good an appetite as a walk to White Conduit-house, where he had been that morning. He looked at the table-cloth, and praised the figure of the damask; talked of a feast where he had been the day before, but that the venison was over done. All this, however, procured the poor creature no invitation, and he was not yet sufficiently hardened to stay without being asked; wherefore, finding the gentleman of the house insensible to all his fetches, he thought proper, at last, to retire, and mend his appetite by a walk in the Park.

You then, O ye beggars of my acquaintance, whether in rags or lace; whether in Kent-street or the Mall; whether at the Smyrna or St. Giles's, might I advise as a friend, never seem in want of the favour which you solicit. Apply to every passion but pity, for redress. You may find relief from vanity, from self-interest, or from avarice, but seldom from compassion. The very eloquence of a poor man is disgusting; and that
mouth

mouth which is opened even for flattery, is seldom expected to close without a petition.

If then you would ward off the gripe of poverty, pretend to be a stranger to her, and she will at least use you with ceremony. Hear not my advice, but that of Offellus. If you be caught dining upon a halfpenny porringer of pease soup and potatoes, praise the wholesomeness of your frugal repast. You may observe, that Dr. Cheyne has prescribed pease broth for the gravel, hint that you are not one of those who are always making a god of your belly. If you are obliged to wear a flimsy stuff in the midst of winter, be the first to remark that stuffs are very much worn at Paris. If there be found some irreparable defects in any part of your equipage, which cannot be concealed by all the arts of sitting cross-legged, coaxing, or darning, say, that neither you nor Sampson Gideon were ever very fond of dress. Or if you be a philosopher, hint that Plato or Seneca are the tailors you choose to employ; assure the company that man ought to be content with a bare covering, since what now is so much the pride of some, was formerly our shame. Horace will give you a Latin sentence fit for the occasion,

Toga defendere frigus quamvis crassa queat.

In short, however caught, do not give up, but ascribe to the frugality of your disposition what others might be apt to attribute to the narrowness of your circumstances, and appear rather to be a miser than a beggar. To be poor, and to seem poor, is a certain method never to rise. Pride in the great is hateful, in the wise it is ridiculous ; *beggarly pride* is the only sort of vanity I can excuse.



(75)

THE
H I S T O R Y
O F
H Y P A S I A.

MAN, when secluded from society, is not a more solitary being than the woman who leaves the duties of her own sex to invade the privileges of ours. She seems, in such circumstances, like one in banishment; she appears like a neutral being between the sexes; and tho' she may have the admiration of both, she finds true happiness from neither.

Of all the ladies of antiquity, I have read of none who was ever more justly celebrated than the beautiful Hypasia, the daughter of Leon the philosopher. This most accomplished of women was born at Alexandria, in the reign of Theodosius the younger. Nature was never more lavish of its gifts than it had been to her, endued as she was with the most exalted understanding, and the happiest turn to science. Education completed what nature had begun, and made her the prodigy not only of her age, but the glory of her sex.

From

From her father she learned geometry and astronomy ; she collected from the conversation and schools of the other philosophers, for which Alexandria was at that time famous, the principles of the rest of the sciences.

What cannot be conquered by natural penetration and a passion for study ? The boundless knowledge which at that period of time was required to form the character of a philosopher no way discouraged her ; she delivered herself up to the study of Aristotle and Plato, and soon not one in all Alexandria understood so perfectly as she, all the difficulties of these two philosophers.

But not their systems alone, but those of every other sect were quite familiar to her ; and to this knowledge she added that of polite learning, and the art of oratory. All the learning which it was possible for the human mind to contain, being joined to a most enchanting eloquence, rendered this lady the wonder not only of the populace, who easily admire, but of philosophers themselves, who are seldom fond of admiration.

The city of Alexandria was every day crowded with strangers, who came from all parts of Greece and Asia to see and hear her. As for the charms of her person, they might not probably have been mentioned, did she not join to a beauty the most striking,

striking, a virtue that might repress the most assuming; and though in the whole capital, famed for charms, there was not one who could equal her in beauty; though in a city, the resort of all the learning then existing in the world, there was not one who could equal her in knowledge; yet, with such accomplishments, Hypasia was the most modest of her sex. Her reputation for virtue was not less than her virtues; and though, in a city divided between two factions, though visited by the wits and the philosophers of the age, calumny never dared to suspect her morals, or attempt her character. Both the Christians and the Heathens who have transmitted her history and her misfortunes, have but one voice, when they speak of her beauty, her knowledge, and her virtue. Nay, so much harmony reigns in their accounts of this prodigy of perfection, that, in spite of the opposition of their faith, we should never have been able to judge of what religion was Hypasia, were we not informed, from other circumstances, that she was an heathen. Providence had taken so much pains in forming her, that we are almost induced to complain of its not having endeavoured to make her a Christian; but from this complaint we are deterred by a thousand contrary observations, which lead us to reverence its inscrutable mysteries.

This

This great reputation which she so justly was possessed of, was at last, however, the occasion of her ruin.

The person who then possessed the patriarchate of Alexandria was equally remarkable for his violence, cruelty, and pride. Conducted by an ill-grounded zeal for the Christian religion, or perhaps desirous of augmenting his authority in the city, he had long meditated the banishment of the Jews. A difference arising between them and the Christians with respect to some public games, seemed to him a proper juncture for putting his ambitious designs into execution. He found no difficulty in exciting the people, naturally disposed to revolt. The prefect, who at that time commanded the city, interposed on this occasion, and thought it just to put one of the chief creatures of the patriarch to the torture, in order to discover the first promoter of the conspiracy. The patriarch, enraged at the injustice he thought offered to his character and dignity, and piqued at the protection which was offered to the Jews, sent for the chiefs of the synagogue, and enjoined them to renounce their designs, upon pain of incurring his highest displeasure.

The Jews, far from fearing his menaces, excited new tumults, in which several citizens had the misfortune to fall. The patriarch could no longer contain ;

contain; at the head of a numerous body of Christians, he flew to the synagogues, which he demolished, and drove the Jews from a city, of which they had been possessed since the times of Alexander the great. It may be easily imagined that the prefect could not behold, without pain, his jurisdiction thus insulted, and the city deprived of a number of its most industrious inhabitants.

The affair was therefore brought before the emperor. The patriarch complained of the excesses of the Jews, and the prefect of the outrages of the patriarch. At this very juncture, five hundred monks of mount Nitria, imagining the life of their chief to be in danger, and that their religion was threatened in his fall, flew into the city with ungovernable rage, attacked the prefect in the streets, and not content with loading him with reproaches, wounded him in several places.

The citizens had by this time notice of the fury of the monks; they, therefore, assembled in a body, put the monks to flight, seized on him who had been found throwing a stone, and delivered him to the prefect, who caused him to be put to death without farther delay. .

The patriarch immediately ordered the dead body, which had been exposed to view, to be taken down, procured for it all the pomp and

rites of burial, and went even so far as himself to pronounce the funeral oration, in which he classed a seditious monk among the martyrs. This conduct was by no means generally approved of; the most moderate even among the Christians perceived and blamed his indiscretion; but he was now too far advanced to retire. He had made several overtures towards a reconciliation with the prefect, which not succeeding, he bore all those an implacable hatred whom he imagined to have any hand in traversing his designs; but Hypasia was particularly destined to ruin. She could not find pardon, as she was known to have a most refined friendship for the prefect; wherefore the populace were incited against her. *Peter*, a reader of the principal church, one of those vile slaves by which men in power are too frequently attended, wretches ever ready to commit any crime which they hope may render them agreeable to their employer; this fellow, I say, attended by a crowd of villains, waited for Hypasia, as she was returning from a visit, at her own door, seized her as she was going in, and dragged her to one of the churches called Cesarea, where, stripping her in the most inhuman manner, they exercised the most inhuman cruelties upon her, cut her into pieces, and burnt her remains to ashes. Such was the end of Hypasia, the glory of her own sex, and the astonishment of ours.

(81)

O N

J U S T I C E

A N D

G E N E R O S I T Y.

LYSIPPUS is a man whose greatness of soul the whole world admires. His generosity is such, that it prevents a demand, and saves the receiver the trouble and the confusion of a request. His liberality also does not oblige more by its greatness, than by his inimitable grace in giving. Sometimes he even distributes his bounties to strangers, and has been known to do good offices to those who professed themselves his enemies. All the world are unanimous in the praise of his generosity; there is only one sort of people, who complain of his conduct. Lyippus does not pay his debts.

It is no difficult matter to account for a conduct so seemingly incompatible with itself. There is greatness in being generous, and there is only simple justice in satisfying his creditors. Generosity is the part of a soul raised above the vulgar. There is in it something of what we admire in

G

heroes,

82 On JUSTICE and GENEROSITY.

heroes, and praise with a degree of rapture. Justice, on the contrary, is a mere mechanic virtue, only fit for tradesmen, and what is practised by every broker in Change Alley.

In paying his debts a man barely does his duty, and it is an action attended with no sort of glory. Should Lyfippus satisfy his creditors, who would be at the pains of telling it to the world. Generosity is a virtue of a very different complexion. It is raised above duty, and from its elevation attracts the attention, and the praises of us little mortals below.

In this manner do men generally reason upon justice and generosity. The first is despised, though a virtue essential to the good of society, and the other attracts our esteem, which too frequently proceeds from an impetuosity of temper, rather directed by vanity than reason. Lyfippus is told that his banker asks a debt of forty pounds, and that a distressed acquaintance petitions for the same sum. He gives it without hesitating to the latter; for he demands as a favour what the former requires as a debt.

Mankind in general are not sufficiently acquainted with the import of the word Justice: It is commonly believed to consist only in a performance of those duties to which the laws of
society

ON JUSTICE and GENEROSITY. 83

society can oblige us. This I allow is sometimes the import of the word, and in this sense justice is distinguished from equity ; but there is a justice still more extensive, and which can be shewn to embrace all the virtues united.

Justice may be defined, that virtue which impels us to give to every person what is his due. In this extended sense of the word, it comprehends the practice of every virtue which reason prescribes, or society should expect. Our duty to our maker, to each other, and to ourselves, are fully answered, if we give them what we owe them. Thus justice, properly speaking, is the only virtue, and all the rest have their origin in it.

The qualities of candour, fortitude, charity, and generosity, for instance, are not in their own nature, virtues ; and, if ever they deserve the title, it is owing only to justice, which impels and directs them. Without such a moderator, candour might become indiscretion, fortitude obstinacy, charity imprudence, and generosity mistaken profusion.

A disinterested action, if it be not conducted by justice, is at best indifferent in its nature, and not unfrequently even turns to vice. The expences of society, of presents, of entertainments,

84 On JUSTICE and GENEROSITY.

and the other helps to chearfulness, are actions merely indifferent, when not repugnant to a better method of disposing of our superfluities, but they become vicious when they obstruct or exhaust our abilities from a more virtuous disposition of our circumstances.

True generosity is a duty as indispensibly necessary as those imposed upon us by law. It is a rule imposed upon us by reason, which should be the sovereign law of a rational being. But this generosity does not consist in obeying every impulse of humanity, in following blind passion for our guide, and impairing our circumstances by present benefactions, so as to render us incapable of future ones.

Misers are generally characterized as men without honour, or without humanity, who live only to accumulate, and to this passion sacrifice every other happiness. They have been described as madmen, who, in the midst of abundance, banish every pleasure, and make, from imaginary wants, real necessities. But few, very few, correspond to this exaggerated picture; and, perhaps, there is not one in whom all these circumstances are found united. Instead of this, we find the sober and the industrious branded by the vain and the idle, with this odious appellation. Men who, by frugality and labour, raise themselves above
their

their equals, and contribute their share of industry to the common stock.

Whatever the vain or the ignorant may say, well were it for society had we more of this character amongst us. In general, these close men are found at last the true benefactors of society. With an avaricious man we seldom lose in our dealings, but too frequently in our commerce with prodigality.

A French priest, whose name was Godinot, went for a long time by the name of the Griper. He refused to relieve the most apparent wretchedness, and by a skilful management of his vineyard, had the good fortune to acquire immense sums of money. The inhabitants of Rheims, who were his fellow-citizens, detested him, and the populace, who seldom love a miser, wherever he went, received him with contempt. He still, however, continued his former simplicity of life, his amazing and unremitted frugality. This good man had long perceived the wants of the poor in the city, particularly, in having no water but what they were obliged to buy at an advanced price; wherefore, that whole fortune, which he had been amassing, he laid out in an aqueduct, by which he did the poor more useful and lasting service, than if he had distributed his whole income in charity every day at his door.

86 On JUSTICE and GENEROSITY.

Among men long conversant with books, we too frequently find those misplaced virtues, of which I have been now complaining. We find the studious animated with a strong passion, for the great virtues, as they are mistakenly called, and utterly forgetful of the ordinary ones. The declamations of philosophy are generally rather exhausted on these supererogatory duties, than on such as are indispensably necessary. A man, therefore, who has taken his ideas of mankind from study alone, generally comes into the world with an heart melting at every fictitious distress. Thus he is induced by misplaced liberality, to put himself into the indigent circumstances of the person he relieves.

I shall conclude this paper with the advice of one of the Ancients, to a young man, whom he saw giving away all his substance to pretended distress. “It is possible, that the person you
“relieve, may be an honest man; and I know,
“that you, who relieve him, are such. You
“see, then, by your generosity, you only rob
“a man, who is certainly deserving, to bestow
“it on one who may possibly be a rogue. And
“while you are unjust in rewarding uncertain
“merit, you are doubly guilty by stripping
“yourself.”

W I T.

By V O L T A I R E.

WIT seems to be one of those undetermined sounds to which we affix scarce any precise idea. It is something more than judgment, genius, taste, talent, penetration, grace, delicacy, and yet it partakes somewhat of each. It may be properly defined ingenious reason. It is one of those general terms which always want another word to determine their signification; and when we hear such a work praised for being witty, such a man applauded for wit, it is but just to ask of what sort.

Thus Corneille with sublimity, and Boileau with exactness; Fontaine with simplicity, and Bruyere by being natural, are all reckoned men of wit, yet each differs from the other; and still more from some philosophers, who may be accounted witty men, who join sagacity to imagination.

They who despise the Genius of Aristotle (instead of being contented with rejecting his Physics

only, which cannot be good, as he had but few experiments to direct them) will be much surprized to find in his rhetoric the manner of saying things wittily. He informs us there, that the art does not consist in simply using the proper term, which offers to the imagination nothing new. We ought, says he, rather to employ a metaphor, or a figure, the sense of which must be clear, and the expression energetic.

Of this he gives several examples, and, among others, the expression of Pericles, in talking of a battle in which the most beautiful of the youth of Athens were slain, *The year has been deprived of its spring*. He adds, that the thought also should have the grace of novelty. The person who first, to express how pleasures were generally attended with pain, made use of the simile of roses being gathered among thorns, had wit. But it is otherwise with those who repeat it after him.

But a metaphor is not always the wittiest manner of expressing a thing with spirit, a great deal consists in an unexpected turn, in leaving us to understand, without trouble, a part of the poet's meaning. This is so much the more pleasing, as it seems an indirect compliment to the reader, and shews his wit, as well as that of the Poet. Allusion, allegory, comparison, each furnishes an extensive field of ingenuity; history, fable, and the effects

effects of nature, furnish matter to a well-regulated imagination, that can never be exhausted.

Let us then consider in what Places wit should be admitted. It seems pretty manifest, that, in works of dignity, it should be used with caution, as it is only, at best, an ornament. The great art is in the proper timing this ornament. A fine thought, a just or elegant comparison, are faults, when reason only, or when passion should speak, and particularly where the subject is interesting. Using it in such circumstances as these, should not be called false wit (as Addison commonly expresses it;) but wit displaced, and every misplaced beauty is rather a defect. This is a fault in which Virgil never transgresses, and with which Tasso may be sometimes reproached, all admirable as he is at other times. This error generally arises from an author's exuberance; filled with ideas of different kinds, he is desirous of shewing himself, when he ought only to exhibit his personages. The best method of knowing the true use to be made of wit is, by reading the small number of good works, both in the learned languages, and in our own.

False wit, as I have already hinted, is very different from displaced wit. This is not only a false thought, but it is generally far-fetched also. A man of some wit, who formerly abridged
Homer

Homer in French verse, imagined he added beauties to the old simple bard, in sometimes lending him embellishments. On the reconciling Achilles with Agamemnon, he thus flourishes it :

*Tout le camp s'ecria dans une joie extrême
Que ne vaincra t-il point ? Il s'est vaincu lui même !*

The shouting army cry'd with joy extreme,
He sure must conquer, who himself can tame !

His taming himself does by no means imply his conquering others ; but this is not the absurdity alone, but in making the army, as if by inspiration, join in a far-fetched observation. If this shocks the reader of nice discernment, how much more so must all those forced expressions, cold yet stiffened allusions, and bloated nothings displease, which are found in great plenty in works of otherwise real merit. How can we bear to hear a mathematician say, “ If Saturn
“ should happen to be removed, the remotest of
“ his satellites would probably take his place, since
“ great princes always keep their successors at
“ a distance.” It is intolerable, when speaking of Hercules understanding physicks, to say that there was no resisting a philosopher of his force. The desire of sparkling and surprising is too frequently the cause of excesses of this kind.

This

This trifling vanity has also produced the playing upon words in every language, which is the worst sort of false wit.

False taste is very different from false wit, as the latter always proceeds from affectation, from an effort to go wrong; on the contrary, the other is an habit of going wrong without design, and following, as if by instinct, some bad, though established model. The incoherent exuberance of an oriental imagination is a false taste, and an improper example to imitate: however, they more frequently transgress in this respect, rather from a poverty than a copiousness of real genius. Falling stars, splitting mountains, rivers flowing to their sources, the sun and moon dissolving, false and unnatural comparisons, and nature every where exaggerated, form the character of these writers; and this arises from their never, in these countries, being permitted to speak in public. True eloquence has never been cultivated there, and it is much easier to write in a turgid strain, than with ease and delicate simplicity.

In a word, false wit is entirely the opposite of the Eastern manner; the man of false wit desires to say in riddles, what others have spoken naturally. He desires to unite ideas the most incompatible, to divide those which nature has united. To catch unnatural similitudes, without discretion
to

to unite pleasantry with what is serious, to mix great and little images together, and to confuse instead of satisfying the imagination.

But perspicuity is not the only part of style in which false wit is not conspicuous, we are at the same time too fond of embellishment. In our most applauded productions there is scarce a sentence which is not loaded with unnecessary ornament, which, though it may add grace to a period, generally disunites the force of a paragraph. The attention, as in Gothic architecture is split upon a number of minute elegances, which, though each are separately pretty, diminish the force of the whole.

These are faults that seem to characterize the writings of the age; to these every author who would be admired must conform. With these faults he is sure of immediate applause, though frequently scarce allowed a reading. We have seen many a writer, of late, make his appearance with these qualifications, instead of merit; we have seen him read by a few, praised by all, and soon forgotten.

I have been often at a loss, whether to ascribe the decline of taste in a nation, to the reader or the writer. Perhaps both are in fault; the one satiated with varied instances of perfection, grows
whim-

whimsical, desires something new, and mistakes change for improvement. The other, willing to avoid the character of an imitator, borrows peculiarities from affectation, and becomes original only in trifles. In short, it is as difficult now among such a number of candidates, to catch the attention without these oddities of stile, as to be remarkable in a crowd without some peculiarity in dress and behaviour.

But these are generally fleeting modes, which are introduced by the great, brought up to please for a day, soon to be displaced by others, which have the advantages of being more new to recommend them. The literary republic, however, will never suffer real injury from such ; for whatever pleases from its novelty alone, can never please long. Not from these, then, but from the compilers and commentators of the day, is literature to expect the mortal blow ; from pedants, who have no claim but their industry for our applause ; from laborious drones, who write through folios, but do not think through a page.

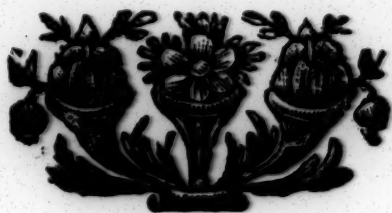


A

S O N N E T.

WEEPING, murmuring, complaining,
 Lost to every gay delight ;
MYRA, too sincere for feigning,
 Fears th' approaching bridal night.

Yet, why this killing soft dejection ?
 Why dim thy beauty with a tear ?
Had MYRA followed my direction,
 She long had wanted cause to fear.



S O M E
P A R T I C U L A R S

Relating to

FATHER FREIJO.

*Primus mortales tollere contra
Est oculos ausus primusq; assurgere contra.*

LUCR.

THE Spanish nation has, for many centuries past, been remarkable for the grossest ignorance in polite literature, especially in point of natural philosophy; a science so useful to mankind, that her neighbours have ever esteemed it a matter of the greatest importance, to endeavour, by repeated experiments, to strike a light out of the chaos, in which truth seemed to be confounded. Their curiosity, in this respect, was so indifferent, that, though they had discovered new worlds, they were at a loss to explain the phænomena of their own, and their pride so unaccountable, that they disdained to borrow from others that instruction, which their natural indolence permitted them not to acquire.

96 Particulars relating to Father FREIJO.

It gives me, however, a secret satisfaction, to behold an extraordinary genius now existing in that nation, whose studious endeavours seem calculated to undeceive the superstitious, and instruct the ignorant: I mean the celebrated Padre Freijo. In unravelling the mysteries of nature, and explaining physical experiments, he takes an opportunity of displaying the concurrence of second causes, in those very wonders which the vulgar ascribe to super-natural influence.

An example of this kind happened a few years ago, in a small town of the Kingdom of Valencia. Passing through at the hour of mass, he alighted from his mule, and proceeded to the parish-church, which he found extremely crowded, and there appeared on the faces of the faithful a more than usual alacrity. The sun, it seems, which had been for some minutes under a cloud, had begun to shine on a large crucifix, that stood on the middle of the altar, studded with several precious stones. The reflexion from these, and from the diamond eyes of some silver saints, so dazzled the multitude, that they unanimously cried out, A miracle! a miracle! whilst the priest at the altar, with seeming consternation, continued his heavenly conversation. Padre Freijo soon dissipated the charm, by tying his handkerchief round the head of one of the statues, for which he was arraigned by the inquisition; whose flames, however, he has had the good fortune hitherto to escape.



The B E E.

NUMBER IV.

SATURDAY, *October 27*, 1759.

MISCELLANEOUS.



ERE I to measure the merit of my present undertaking by its success, or the rapidity of its sale, I might be led to form conclusions by no means favourable to the pride of an author. Should I estimate my fame by its extent, every News-Paper and every Magazine would leave me far behind. Their fame is diffused in a very wide circle, that of some as far as Islington, and some yet farther still; while mine, I sincerely believe, has hardly travelled beyond the sound of Bow-bell; and while the works of others fly like unpinioned swans, I find my own move as heavily as a new-plucked goose.

H

Still,

Still, however, I have as much pride as they who have ten times as many readers. It is impossible to repeat all the agreeable delusions in which a disappointed author is apt to find comfort. I conclude, that what my reputation wants in extent, is made up by its solidity. *Minus juvat Gloria lata quam magna.* I have great satisfaction in considering the delicacy and discernment of those readers I have, and in ascribing my want of popularity to the ignorance or inattention of those I have not. All the world may forsake an author, but vanity will never forsake him.

Yet notwithstanding so sincere a confession, I was once induced to shew my indignation against the public, by discontinuing my endeavours to please; and was bravely resolved, like Raleigh, to vex them, by burning my manuscript in a passion. Upon recollection, however, I considered what set or body of people would be displeased at my rashness. The sun, after so sad an accident, might shine next morning as bright as usual; men might laugh and sing the next day, and transact business as before, and not a single creature feel any regret but myself.

I reflected upon the story of a minister, who, in the reign of Charles II. upon a certain occasion, resigned all his posts, and retired into the country in a fit of resentment. But as he had not

given the world entirely up with his ambition, he sent a messenger to town, to see how the courtiers would bear his resignation. Upon the messenger's return, he was asked whether there appeared any commotions at court? To which he replied, There were very great ones. "Ay," says the minister, I knew my friends would "make a bustle; all petitioning the king for my restoration, I presume." "No, Sir, replied the messenger, they are only petitioning his majesty to be put in your place." In the same manner, should I retire in indignation, instead of having Apollo in mourning, or the Muses in a fit of the spleen; instead of having the learned world apostrophising at my untimely decease, perhaps all Grub-street might laugh at my fall, and self-approving dignity might never be able to shield me from ridicule. In short, I am resolved to write on, if it were only to spite them. If the present generation will not hear my voice, hearken, O posterity, to you I call, and from you I expect redress! What rapture will it not give to have the Scaligers, Daciers, and Warburtons of future times commenting with admiration upon every line I now write, working away those ignorant creatures who offer to arraign my merit with all the virulence of learned reproach. Ay, my friends, let them feel it; call names; never spare them; they deserve it all, and ten times more. I have been told of a critic, who was crucified, at the

command of another, to the reputation of Homer. That, no doubt, was more than poetical justice, and I shall be perfectly content if those who criticise me are only clapped in the pillory, kept fifteen days upon bread and water, and obliged to run the gantlope through Pater-noster Row. The truth is, I can expect happiness from posterity either way. If I write ill, happy in being forgotten; if well, happy in being remembered with respect.

Yet, considering things in a prudential light, perhaps I was mistaken in designing my paper as an agreeable relaxation to the studious, or an help to conversation among the gay; instead of addressing it to such, I should have written down to the taste and apprehension of the many, and sought for reputation on the broad road. Literary fame I now find like religious, generally begins among the vulgar. As for the polite, they are so very polite, as never to applaud upon any account. One of these, with a face screwed up into affectation, tells you, that fools may *admire*, but men of sense only *approve*. Thus, lest he should rise into rapture at any thing new, he keeps down every passion but pride and self-importance; approves with phlegm, and the poor author is damned in the taking a pinch of snuff. Another has written a book himself, and being condemned for a dunce, he turns a sort of king's evidence

evidence in criticism, and now becomes the terror of every offender. A third, possessed of full-grown reputation, shades off every beam of favour from those who endeavour to grow beneath him, and keeps down that merit, which, but for his influence, might rise into equal eminence. While others, still worse, peruse old books for their amusement, and new books only to condemn; so that the public seem heartily sick of all but the business of the day, and read every thing new with as little attention as they examine the faces of the passing crowd.

From these considerations I was once determined to throw off all connexions with taste, and fairly address my countrymen in the same engaging style and manner with other periodical pamphlets, much more in vogue than probably mine shall ever be. To effect this, I had thoughts of changing the title into that of the ROYAL BEE, the ANTI-GALLICAN BEE, or the BEE'S MAGAZINE. I had laid in a proper stock of popular topicks, such as encomiums on the king of Prussia, invectives against the queen of Hungary and the French, the necessity of a militia, our undoubted sovereignty of the seas, reflections upon the present state of affairs, a dissertation upon liberty, some seasonable thoughts upon the intended bridge of Black-friars, and an address to Britons. The history of an old woman, whose teeth grew three inches

long, an ode upon our victories, a rebus, an acrostic upon Miss Peggy P. and a journal of the weather. All this, together with four extraordinary pages of *letter press*, a beautiful map of England, and two prints curiously coloured from nature. I fancied might touch their very souls. I was actually beginning an address to the people, when my pride at last overcame my prudence, and determined me to endeavour to please by the goodness of my entertainment, rather than by the magnificence of my sign.

The Spectator, and many succeeding essayists, frequently inform us of the numerous compliments paid them in the course of their lucubrations; of the frequent encouragements they met to inspire them with ardour, and increase their eagerness to please. I have received *my letters* as well as they; but alas! not congratulatory ones; not assuring me of success and favour; but pregnant with bodings that might shake even fortitude itself.

One gentleman assures me, he intends to throw away no more three-pences in purchasing the BEE, and what is still more dismal, he will not recommend me as a poor author wanting encouragement to his neighbourhood, which it seems is very numerous. Were my soul set upon three-pences, what anxiety might not such a denunciation

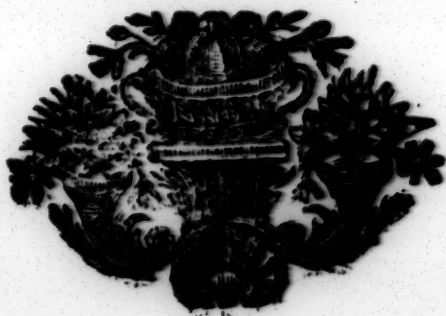
tion produce ! But such does not happen to be the present motive of publication ! I write partly to shew my good-nature, and partly to shew my vanity ; nor will I lay down the pen till I am satisfied one way or another.

Others have disliked the title and the motto of my paper, point out a mistake in the one, and assure me the other has been consigned to dulness by anticipation. All this may be true ; *but what is that to me ?* Titles and mottoes to books are like escutcheons and dignities in the hands of a king. The wise sometimes condescend to *accept* of them ; but none but a fool will imagine them of any real importance. We ought to depend upon intrinsic merit, and not the slender helps of title. *Nam quæ non fecimus ipsi, vix ea nostra voco.*

For my part, I am ever ready to mistrust a promising title, and have, at some expence, been instructed not to hearken to the voice of an advertisement, let it plead never so loudly, or never so long. A countryman coming one day to Smithfield, in order to take a slice of Bartholomew-fair, found a perfect shew before every booth. The drummer, the fire-eater, the wire-walker, and the salt-box were all employed to invite him in. *Just a going ; the court of the king of Prussia in all his glory ; pray, gentlemen,*

104 MISCELLANEOUS.

walk in and see. From people who generously gave so much away, the clown expected a monstrous bargain for his money when he got in. He steps up, pays his sixpence, the curtain is drawn, when too late he finds, that he had the best part of the shew for nothing at the door.



A FLE-

A

FLEMISH TRADITION.

EVERY country has its traditions, which, either too minute or not sufficiently authentic to receive historical sanction, are handed down among the vulgar, and serve at once to instruct and amuse them. Of this number the adventures of Robin Hood, the hunting of Chevy-chace, and the bravery of Johnny Armstrong, among the English; of Kaul Dereg, among the Irish; and Creighton, among the Scots, are instances. Of all the traditions, however, I remember to have heard, I do not recollect any more remarkable than one still current in Flanders; a story generally the first the peasants tell their children, when they bid them behave like Bidderman the wife. It is by no means, however, a model to be set before a polite people for imitation; since if, on the one hand, we perceive in it the steady influence of patriotism; we, on the other, find as strong a desire of revenge. But, to wave introduction, let us to the story.

When the Saracens over-ran Europe with their armies, and penetrated as far even as Antwerp,
Bidderman

Bidderman was Lord of a city, which time has since swept into destruction. As the inhabitants of this country were divided under separate leaders, the Saracens found an easy conquest, and the city of Bidderman, among the rest, became a prey to the victors.

Thus dispossessed of his paternal city, our unfortunate governor was obliged to seek refuge from the neighbouring princes, who were as yet unsubdued, and he for some time lived in a state of wretched dependance among them.

Soon, however, his love to his native country brought him back to his own city, resolved to rescue it from the enemy, or fall in the attempt: Thus, in disguise, he went among the inhabitants, and endeavoured, but in vain, to excite them to a revolt. Former misfortunes lay so heavily on their minds, that they rather chose to suffer the most cruel bondage, than attempt to vindicate their former freedom.

As he was thus one day employed: whether by information, or from suspicion, is not known, he was apprehended by a Saracen soldier as a spy, and brought before the very tribunal at which he once presided. The account he gave of himself was by no means satisfactory. He could produce no friends to vindicate his character; wherefore,

as the Saracens knew not their prisoner, and as they had no direct proofs against him, they were content with condemning him to be publicly whipt as a vagabond.

The execution of this sentence was accordingly performed with the utmost rigour. Bidderman was bound to the post, the executioner seeming disposed to add to the cruelty of the sentence, as he received no bribe for lenity. Whenever Bidderman groaned under the scourge, the other, only redoubling his blows, cried out, *Does the villain murmur?* If Bidderman entreated but a moment's respite from torture, the other only repeated his former exclamation, *Does the villain murmur?*

From this period, revenge as well as patriotism, took entire possession of his soul. His fury stoop'd so low as to follow the executioner with unremitting resentment. But conceiving that the best method to attain these ends, was to acquire some eminence in the city, he laid himself out to oblige its new masters, studied every art, and practis'd every meanness that serve to promote the needy, or render the poor pleasing, and by these means, in a few years, he came to be of some note in the city, which justly belonged entirely to him.

The

The executioner was, therefore, the first object of his resentment, and he even practised the lowest fraud to gratify the revenge he owed him. A piece of plate, which Biddeman had previously stolen from the Saracen governor, he privately conveyed into the executioner's house, and then gave information of the theft. They who are any way acquainted with the rigour of the Arabian laws, know that theft is punished with immediate death. The proof was direct in this case ; the executioner had nothing to offer in his own defence, and he was therefore condemned to be beheaded upon a scaffold in the public market place. As there was no executioner in the city but the very man who was now to suffer, Biddeman himself undertook this, to him, most agreeable office. The criminal was conducted from the judgment seat, bound with cords. The scaffold was erected, and he placed in such a manner, as he might lie most convenient for the blow.

But his death alone was not sufficient to satisfy the resentment of this extraordinary man, unless it was aggravated with every circumstance of cruelty. Wherefore, coming up the scaffold, and disposing every thing in readiness for the intended blow, with the sword in his hand he approached the criminal, and whispering in a low voice, assured him, that he himself was the very person that had once been used with so much cruelty ;

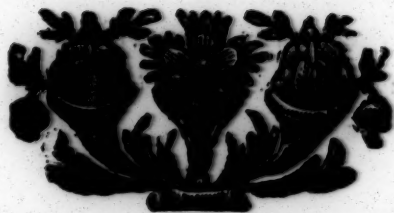
cruelty ; that to his knowledge, he died very innocently, for the plate had been stolen by himself, and privately conveyed into the house of the other.

“ O, my countrymen, cried the criminal, “ do you hear what this man says ? ” — *Does the villain murmur ?* replied Bidderman, and immediately, at one blow, severed his head from his body.

Still, however, he was not content till he had ample vengeance of the governors of the city, who condemned him. To effect this, he hired a small house adjoining to the town wall, under which he every day dug, and carried out the earth in a basket. In this unremitting labour, he continued several years, every day digging a little, and carrying the earth unsuspected away. By this means he at last made a secret communication from the country into the city, and only wanted the appearance of an enemy, in order to betray it. This opportunity, at length, offered ; the French army came into the neighbourhood, but had no thoughts of sitting down before a town which they considered as impregnable. Bidderman, however, soon altered their resolutions, and, upon communicating his plan to the General, he embraced it with ardour. Through
the

210 A FLEMISH TRADITION.

the private passage above-mentioned, he introduced a large body of the most resolute soldiers, who soon opened the gates for the rest, and the whole army rushing in, put every Saracen that was found to the sword.



T H E

THE

Sagacity of some INSECTS.

TO the AUTHOR of the B E E.

S I R,

ANIMALS, in general, are sagacious in proportion as they cultivate society. The elephant and the beaver shew the greatest signs of this when united ; but when man intrudes into their communities, they lose all their spirit of industry, and testify but a very small share of that sagacity, for which, when in a social state, they are so remarkable.

Among insects, the labours of the bee and the ant have employed the attention and admiration of the naturalist ; but their whole sagacity is lost upon separation, and a single bee or ant, seems destitute of every degree of industry, is the most stupid insect imaginable, languishes for a time in solitude, and soon dies.

Of all the solitary insects I have ever remarked, the spider is the most sagacious, and its actions to me, who have attentively considered them,

them, seem almost to exceed belief. This insect is formed by nature for a state of war, not only upon other insects, but upon each other. For this state nature seems perfectly well to have formed it. Its head and breast are covered with a strong natural coat of mail, which is impenetrable to the attempts of every other insect, and its belly is enveloped in a soft pliant skin, which eludes the sting even of a wasp. Its legs are terminated by strong claws, not unlike those of a lobster, and their vast length, like spears, serve to keep every assailant at a distance.

Not worse furnished for observation than for an attack or a defence, it has several eyes, large, transparent, and covered with an horny substance, which, however, does not impede its vision. Besides this, it is furnished with a forceps above the mouth, which serves to kill or secure the prey already caught in its claws or its net.

Such are the implements of war with which the body is immediately furnish'd; but its net to entangle the enemy seems what it chiefly trusts to, and what it takes most pains to render as complete as possible. Nature has furnished the body of this little creature with a glutinous liquid, which proceeding from the anus, it spins into a thread coarser or finer, as it chuses to contract or dilate its sphincter. In order to fix its
 4 thread

sphincter. In order to fix its thread when it begins to weave, it emits a small drop of its liquid against the wall, which hardening by degrees, serves to hold the thread very firmly. Then receding from the first point, as it recedes the thread lengthens; and when the spider has come to the place where the other end of the thread should be fixed, gathering up with its claws the thread which would otherwise be too slack, it is stretched tightly, and fixed in the same manner to the wall as before.

In this manner it spins and fixes several threads parallel to each other, which, so to speak, serve as the warp to the intended web. To form the woof, it spins in the same manner its thread, transversely fixing one end to the first thread that was spun, and which is always the strongest of the whole web, and the other to the wall. All these threads, being newly spun, are glutinous, and therefore stick to each other wherever they happen to touch, and in those parts of the web most exposed to be torn, our natural artist strengthens them, by doubling the threads sometimes six fold.

Thus far naturalists have gone in the description of this animal; what follows is the result of my own observation upon that species of the insect called an *House-Spider*. I perceived about

114 The Sagacity of some INSECTS.

four years ago, a large spider in one corner of my room, making its web, and though the maid frequently levelled her fatal broom against the labours of the little animal, I had the good fortune then to prevent its destruction, and I may say, it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded.

In three days the web was with incredible diligence completed; nor could I avoid thinking that the insect seemed to exult in its new abode. It frequently traversed it round, examined the strength of every part of it, retired into its hole, and came out very frequently. The first enemy, however, it had to encounter, was another and a much larger spider, which, having no web of its own, and having probably exhausted all its stock in former labours of this kind, came to invade the property of its neighbour. Soon then a terrible encounter ensued, in which the invader seemed to have the victory, and the laborious spider was obliged to take refuge in its hole. Upon this I perceived the victor using every art to draw the enemy from his strong hold. He seemed to go off, but quickly returned, and when he found all arts vain, began to demolish the new web without mercy. This brought on another battle, and, contrary to my expectations, the laborious spider became conqueror, and fairly killed his antagonist.

Now

The Sagacity of some INSECTS. 113

Now then, in peaceable possession of what was justly its own, it waited three days with the utmost patience, repairing the breaches of its web, and taking no sustenance that I could perceive. At last, however, a large blue fly fell into the snare, and struggled hard to get loose. The spider gave it leave to entangle itself as much as possible, but it seemed to be too strong for the cobweb. I must own I was greatly surprized when I saw the spider immediately fall out, and in less than a minute weave a new net round its captive, by which the motion of its wings was stopped, and when it was fairly hampered in this manner, it was seized, and dragged into the hole.

In this manner it lived, in a precarious state, and nature seemed to have fitted it for such a life, for upon a single fly it subsisted for more than a week. I once put a wasp into the nest, but when the spider came out in order to seize it as usual, upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with, it instantly broke all the bands that held it fast, and contributed all that lay in its power to disengage so formidable an antagonist. When the wasp was at liberty, I expected the spider would have set about repairing the breaches that were made in its net, but those it seems were irreparable, wherefore the cobweb was now entirely

Of this life, however, it soon began to grow weary, and resolved to invade the possession of some other spider, since it could not make a web of its own. It formed an attack upon a neighbouring fortification with great vigour, and at first was as vigorously repulsed. Not daunted, however, with one defeat, in this manner it continued to lay siege to another's web for three days, and, at length, having killed the defendant, actually took possession. When smaller flies happen to fall into the snare, the spider does not fall out at once, but very patiently waits till it is sure of them ; for, upon his immediately approaching, the terror of his appearance might give

give the captive strength sufficient to get loose: The manner then is to wait patiently till, by ineffectual and impotent struggles, the captive has wasted all its strength, and then he becomes a certain and an easy conquest.

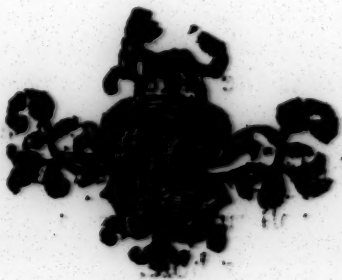
The insect I am now describing, lived three years; every year it changed its skin, and got a new set of legs. I have sometimes plucked off a leg, which grew again in two or three days. At first, it dreaded my approach to its web, but at last it became so familiar as to take a fly out of my hand, and upon my touching any part of the web, would immediately leave its hole, prepared either for a defence or an attack.

To complete this description, it may be observed, that the male spider is much less than the female, and that the latter are oviparous. When they come to lay, they spread a part of their web under the eggs, and then roll them up carefully, as we roll up things in a cloth, and thus hatch them in their hole. If disturbed in their holes, they never attempt to escape without carrying this young brood in their forceps away with them, and thus frequently are sacrificed to their paternal affection.

As soon as ever the young ones leave their artificial covering, they begin to spin, and almost
13 sensibly

118 **The Sagacity of some INSECTS.**

sensibly seem to grow bigger. If they have the good fortune, when even but a day old, to catch a fly, they fall too with good appetites ; but they live sometimes three or four days without any sort of sustenance, and yet still continue to grow larger, so as every day to double their former size. As they grow old, however, they do not still continue to encrease, but their legs only continue to grow longer ; and when a spider becomes entirely stiff with age, and unable to seize its prey, it dies at length of hunger.



THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GREATNESS.

IN every duty, in every science in which we would wish to arrive at perfection, we should propose for the object of our pursuit some certain station even beyond our abilities ; some imaginary excellence, which may amuse and serve to animate our enquiry. In deviating from others, in following an unbeaten road, though we, perhaps, may never arrive at the wish'd-for object ; yet it is possible we may meet several discoveries by the way ; and the certainty of small advantages, even while we travel with security, is not so amusing as the hopes of great rewards, which inspire the adventurer. *Evenit nonnunquam, says Quintillian, ut aliquid grande inveniat qui semper quærit quod nimium est.*

This enterprising spirit is, however, by no means the character of the present age ; every person who should now leave received opinions, who should attempt to be more than a commen-

tator upon philosophy, or an imitator in polite learning, might be regarded as a chimerical projector. Hundreds would be ready not only to point out his errors, but to load him with reproach. Our probable opinions are now regarded as certainties; the difficulties hitherto undiscovered, as utterly inscrutable; and the writers of the last age inimitable, and therefore the properest models of imitation.

One might be almost induced to deplore the philosophic spirit of the age, which in proportion as it enlightens the mind, encreases its timidity, and represses the vigour of every undertaking. Men are now content with being prudently in the right; which, though not the way to make new acquisitions, it must be owned, is the best method of securing what we have. Yet this is certain, that the writer who never deviates, who never hazards a new thought, or a new expression, though his friends may compliment him upon his sagacity, though criticism lifts her feeble voice in his praise, will seldom arrive at any degree of perfection. The way to acquire lasting esteem, is not by the fewness of a writer's faults, but the greatness of his beauties, and our noblest works are generally most replete with both.

An author, who would be sublime, often runs his thought into burlesque; yet I can readily
pardon

The Characteristics of GREATNESS. 121

pardon his mistaking ten times for once succeeding. True Genius walks along a line, and, perhaps, our greatest pleasure is in seeing it so often near falling, without being ever actually down.

Every science has its hitherto undiscovered mysteries, after which men should travel undiscouraged by the failure of former adventurers. Every new attempt serves, perhaps, to facilitate its future invention. We may not find the Philosopher's stone, but we shall probably hit upon new inventions in pursuing it. We shall, perhaps, never be able to discover the longitude, yet, perhaps, we may arrive at new truths in the investigation.

Were any of these sagacious minds among us, (and surely no nation, or no period, could ever compare with us in this particular) were any of those minds, I say, who now sit down contented with exploring the intricacies of another's system, bravely to shake off admiration, and undazzled with the splendour of another's reputation, to chalk out a path to fame for themselves, and boldly cultivate untried experiment, what might not be the result of their enquiries, should the same study that has made them wise, make them enterprising also? What could not such qualities, united, produce? But such is not the character
of

122 The Characteristics of GREATNESS.

of the English, while our neighbours of the continent launch out into the ocean of science, without proper stores for the voyage, we fear shipwreck in every breeze, and consume in port those powers which might probably have weather'd every storm,

Projectors in a state are generally rewarded above their deserts; projectors in the republic of letters, never. If wrong, every inferior dunce thinks himself entituled to laugh at their disappointment; if right, men of superior talents think their honour engaged to oppose, since every new discovery is a tacit diminution of their own pre-eminence,

To aim at excellence, our reputation, our friends, and our all, must be ventured; by aiming only at mediocrity, we run no risque, and we do little service. Prudence and greatness are ever persuading us to contrary pursuits. The one instructs us to be content with our station, and to find happiness in bounding every wish. The other impels us to superiority, and calls nothing happiness but rapture. The one directs to follow mankind, and to act and think with the rest of the world. The other drives us from the crowd, and exposes us as a mark to all the shafts of envy, or ignorance.

Nec minus periculum ex magna fama quam ex mala. TACIT.

The Characteristics of GREATNESS. 123

The rewards of mediocrity are immediately paid, those attending excellence generally paid in reversion. In a word, the little mind who loves itself, will write and think with the vulgar, but the great mind will be bravely eccentric, and scorn the beaten road, from universal benevolence.



A CITY

A

City NIGHT-PIECE.

Ille dolet vere qui sine teste dolet. MART.

THE clock has struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing now wakes but guilt, revelry and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity, or the fallies of cotemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk, where vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past, walked before me, where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child, seems hushed with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all around ! the dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam, no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten, and this hour may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

There

There may come a time when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

What cities, as great as this, have once triumph'd in existence, had their victories as great as ours, joy as just, and as unbounded as we, and with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality. Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some. The sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others, and as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession.

Here stood their citadel, but now grown over with weeds; there their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen, for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of state were conferred on amusing, and not on useful members of society. Thus true virtue languished, their riches and opulence invited the plunderer, who, though once repulsed, returned again, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction.

How few appear in those streets, which but some few hours ago were crowded; and those who

who appear, no longer now wear their daily mask,
nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery.

But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and their distresses too great even for pity. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world seems to have disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These poor shivering females, have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been prostituted to the gay luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter in the streets. Perhaps now lying at the door of their betrayers they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible to calamity, or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve them.

Why, why was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches I cannot relieve! Poor houseless creatures! the world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief. The slightest misfortunes, the most imaginary uneasinesses of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence, and engage our attention; while you weep unheeded, persecuted by every subordinate species

species of tyranny, and finding enmity in every law.

Why was this heart of mine formed with so much sensibility ! or why was not my fortune adapted to its impulse ! Tenderness, without a capacity of relieving, only makes the heart that feels it more wretched than the object which sues for assistance.

But let me turn from a scene of such distress to the sanctified hypocrite, *who has been talking of virtue till the time of bed*, and now steals out, to give a loose to his vices under the protection of midnight ; vices more atrocious, because he attempts to conceal them. See how he pants down the dark alley, and, with hastening steps, fears an acquaintance in every face. He has passed the whole day in company he hates, and now goes to prolong the night among company that as heartily hate him. May his vices be detected ; may the morning rise upon his shame : yet I wish to no purpose ; villainy, when detected, never gives up, but boldly adds impudence to imposture.



An E L E G Y

On that GLORY of her SEX

Mrs. MARY BLAIZE.

GOOD people all, with one accord,
 Lament for Madam BLAIZE,
 Who never wanted a good word——
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom pass'd her door,
 And always found her kind;
 She freely lent to all the poor,——
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighbourhood to please,
 With manners wond'rous winning,
 And never follow'd wicked ways,——
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and sattins new,
 With hoop of monstrous size,
 She never slumber'd in her pew,——
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
 By twenty beaus and more;
 The king himself has follow'd her,——
When she has walk'd before.

But now her wealth and finery fled,
 Her hangers-on cut short all;
 The doctors found, when she was dead,——
Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament, in sorrow sore,
 For Kent-street well may say,
 That had she liv'd a twelve-month more,——
She had not dy'd to-day.



The B E E.

NUMBER V.

SATURDAY, *November 3*, 1759.

Upon POLITICAL FRUGALITY.



FRUGALITY has ever been esteemed a virtue as well among Pagans as Christians : There have been even heroes who have practised it. However, we must acknowledge, that it is too modest a virtue, or, if you will, too obscure a one to be essential to heroism, few heroes have been able to attain to such an height. Frugality agrees much better with politicks ; it seems to be the base, the support, and, in a word, seems to be the inseparable companion of a just administration.

K

However

However this be, there is not, perhaps, in the world a people less fond of this virtue than the English, and of consequence there is not a nation more restless, more exposed to the uneasinesses of life, or less capable of providing for particular happiness. We are taught to despise this virtue from our childhood, our education is improperly directed, and a man who has gone through the politest institutions, is generally the person who is least acquainted with the wholesome precepts of frugality. We every day hear the elegance of taste, the magnificence of some, and the generosity of others, made the subject of our admiration and applause. All this we see represented not as the end and recompense of labour and desert, but as the actual result of genius, as the mark of a noble and exalted mind.

In the midst of these praises bestowed on luxury, for which elegance and taste are but another name, perhaps it may be thought improper to plead the cause of frugality. It may be thought low, or vainly declamatory, to exhort our youth from the follies of dress, and of every other superfluity to accustom themselves, even with mechanic meanness, to the simple necessities of life. Such sort of instructions may appear antiquated; yet, however, they seem the foundations of all our virtues, and the most efficacious method of making mankind useful members of society. Unhappily,
however

however, such discourses are not fashionable among us, and the fashion seems every day growing still more obsolete, since the press, and every other method of exhortation, seems disposed to talk of the luxuries of life as harmless enjoyments. I remember, when a boy, to have remarked, that those who in school wore the finest cloaths, were pointed at as being conceited and proud. At present, our little masters are taught to consider dress betimes, and they are regarded, even at school, with contempt, who do not appear as genteel as the rest. Education should teach us to become useful, sober, disinterested and laborious members of society; but does it not at present point out a different path! It teaches us to multiply our wants, by which means we become more eager to possess, in order to dissipate, a greater charge to ourselves, and more useless or obnoxious to society.

If a youth happens to be possessed of more genius than fortune, he is early informed that he ought to think of his advancement in the world; that he should labour to make himself pleasing to his superiors; that he should shun low company; (by which is meant the company of his equals) that he should rather live a little above than below his fortune; that he should think of becoming great; but he finds none to admonish him to become frugal, to persevere in one single design, to

avoid every pleasure and all flattery, which, however, seeming to conciliate the favour of his superiors, never conciliate their esteem. There are none to teach him that the best way of becoming happy in himself, and useful to others, is to continue in the state which fortune at first placed him, without making too hasty strides to advancement; that greatness may be attained, but should not be expected; and that they who most impatiently expect advancement, are seldom possessed of their wishes. He has few, I say, to teach him this lesson, or to moderate his youthful passions, yet, this experience may say, that a young man, who but for six years of the early part of his life, could seem divested of all his passions, would certainly make, or considerably increase his fortune, and might indulge several of his favourite inclinations in manhood with the utmost security.

The efficaciousness of these means are sufficiently known and acknowledged; but as we are apt to connect a low idea with all our notions of frugality, the person who would persuade us to it, might be accused of preaching up avarice.

Of all vices, however, against which morality dissuades, there is not one more undetermined than this of avarice. Misers are described by some, as men divested of honour, sentiment or humanity;

nity; but this is only an ideal picture, or the resemblance at least is found but in a few. In truth, they who are generally called misers, are some of the very best members of society. The sober, the laborious, the attentive, the frugal, are thus stiled by the gay, giddy, thoughtless and extravagant. The first set of men do society all the good, and the latter all the evil that is felt. Even the excesses of the first no way injure the commonwealth; those of the latter are the most injurious that can be conceived.

The ancient Romans, more rational than we in this particular, were very far from thus misplacing their admiration or praise; instead of regarding the practice of parsimony as low or vicious, they made it synonymous even with probity. They esteemed those virtues so inseparable, that the known expression of *Vir Frugi* signified, at one and the same time, a sober and managing man, an honest man, and a man of substance.

The scriptures, in a thousand places, praise œconomy; and it is every where distinguished from avarice. But in spite of all its sacred dictates, a taste for vain pleasures and foolish expence is the ruling passion of the present times. Passion did I call it, rather the madness which at once possesses the great and the little, the rich and the poor; even some are so intent upon acquiring the

superfluities of life, that they sacrifice its necessities in this foolish pursuit.

To attempt the entire abolition of luxury, as it would be impossible, so it is not my intent. The generality of mankind are too weak, too much slaves, to custom and opinion, to resist the torrent of bad example. But if it be impossible to convert the multitude; those who have received a more extended education, who are enlightened and judicious, may find some hints on this subject useful. They may see some abuses, the suppression of which would by no means endanger public liberty; they may be directed to the abolition of some unnecessary expences, which have no tendency to promote happiness or virtue, and which might be directed to better purposes. Our fireworks, our public feasts and entertainments, our entries of ambassadors, &c. what mummery all this; what childish pageants, what millions are sacrificed in paying tribute to custom, what an unnecessary charge at times when we are pressed with real want, which cannot be satisfied without burthening the poor?

Were such suppressed entirely, not a single creature in the state would have the least cause to mourn their suppression, and many might be eased of a load they now feel lying heavily upon them. If this were put in practice, it would agree with the
advice

advice of a sensible writer of Sweden, who, in the *Gazette de France*, 1753, thus expressed himself on that subject. "It were sincerely to be wished, says he, that the custom were established amongst us, that in all events which cause a publick joy, we made our exultations conspicuous only by acts useful to society. We should then quickly see many useful monuments of our reason, which would much better perpetuate the memory of things worthy of being transmitted to posterity, and would be much more glorious to humanity than all these tumultuous preparations of feasts, entertainments, and other rejoicings used upon such occasions."

The same proposal was long before confirmed by a Chinese emperor, who lived in the last century, who, upon an occasion of extraordinary joy, forbade his subjects to make the usual illuminations, either with a design of sparing their substance, or of turning them to some more durable indication of joy, more glorious for him, and more advantageous to his people.

After such instances of political frugality, can we then continue to blame the Dutch ambassador at a certain court, who receiving, at his departure, the portrait of the king, enriched with diamonds, asked what this fine thing might be worth? Being told that it might amount to about

136 Upon POLITICAL FRUGALITY.

two thousand pounds. “ And why, cries he, cannot his majesty keep the picture, and give me the money ? ” This simplicity may be ridiculed at first ; but, when we come to examine it more closely, men of sense will at once confess that he had reason in what he said, and that a purse of two thousand guineas is much more serviceable than a picture.

Should we follow the same method of state frugality in other respects, what numberless savings might not be the result ! How many possibilities of saving in the administration of justice, which now burdens the subject, and enriches some members of society, who are useful only from its corruption !

It were to be wished, that they who govern kingdoms, would imitate artizans. When at London a new stuff has been invented, it is immediately counterfeited in France. How happy were it for society, if a first minister would be equally solicitous to transplant the useful laws of other countries into his own. We are arrived at a perfect imitation of Porcelaine ; let us endeavour to imitate the good to society that our neighbours are found to practise, and let our neighbours also imitate those parts of duty in which we excel.

There are some men, who, in their garden, attempt to raise those fruits which nature has
adapted

Upon POLITICAL FRUGALITY. 137

adapted only to the sultry climates beneath the line. We have at our very doors a thousand laws and customs infinitely useful; these are the fruits we should endeavour to transplant; these the exotics that would speedily become naturalized to the soil. They might grow in every climate, and benefit every possessor.

The best and the most useful laws I have ever seen, are generally practised in Holland. When two men are determined to go to law with each other, they are first obliged to go before the reconciling judges, called the *peace makers*. If the parties come attended with an advocate or a solicitor, they are obliged to retire, as we take fuel from the fire we are desirous of extinguishing.

The peace makers then begin advising the parties, by assuring them, that it is the height of folly to waste their substance, and make themselves mutually miserable, by having recourse to the tribunals of justice: Follow but our direction, and we will accommodate matters without any expence to either. If the rage of debate is too strong upon either party, they are remitted back for another day, in order that time may soften their tempers, and produce a reconciliation. They are thus sent for twice or thrice; if their folly happens to be incurable, they are permitted to go to law, and as we give up to amputation, such
members

138 Upon POLITICAL FRUGALITY.

members as cannot be cured by art, justice is permitted to take its course.

It is unnecessary to make here long declamations, or calculate what society would save, were this law adopted. I am sensible, that the man who advises any reformation, only serves to make himself ridiculous. What! mankind will be apt to say, adopt the customs of countries that have not so much real liberty as our own, our present customs what are they to any man; we are very happy under them! This must be a very pleasant fellow, who attempts to make us happier than we already are! Does he not know that abuses are the patrimony of a great part of the nation. Why deprive us of a malady by which such numbers find their account. This I must own is an argument to which I have nothing to reply.

What numberless savings might there not be made in both arts and commerce, particularly in the liberty of exercising trade, without the necessary prerequisites of freedom! Such useless obstructions have crept into every state, from a spirit of monopoly, a narrow selfish spirit of gain, without the least attention to general society. Such a clog upon industry frequently drives the poor from labour, and reduces them, by degrees, to a state of hopeless indigence. We have already a more than sufficient repugnance to labour; we should
by

by no means encrease the obstacles, or make excuses in a state for idleness. Such faults have ever crept into a state, under wrong or needy administrations.

Exclusive of the masters, there are numberless faulty expences among the workmen; clubs, garnishes, freedoms, and such like impositions, which are not too minute even for law to take notice of, and which should be abolished without mercy, since they are ever the inlets to excess and idleness, and are the parent of all those outrages which naturally fall upon the more useful part of society. In the towns and countries I have seen, I never saw a city or a village yet, whose miseries were not in proportion to the number of its public houses. In Rotterdam, you may go through eight or ten streets without finding a public house. In Antwerp, almost every second house seems an alehouse. In the one city, all wears the appearance of happiness and warm affluence; in the other, the young fellows walk about the streets in shabby finery, their fathers sit at the door darning or knitting stockings, while their ports are filled with dunghills.

Alehouses are ever an occasion of debauchery and excess, and either in a religious or political light, it would be our highest interest to have the greatest part of them suppressed. They should be put under

der laws of not continuing open beyond a certain hour, and harbouring only proper persons. These rules, it may be said, will diminish the necessary taxes; but this is false reasoning, since what was consumed in debauchery abroad, would, if such a regulation took place, be more justly, and perhaps, more equitably for the workman's family, spent at home; and this cheaper to them, and without loss of time. On the other hand, our alehouses being ever open, interrupt business; the workman is never certain who frequents them, nor can the master be sure of having what was begun, finished at the convenient time.

An habit of frugality among the lower orders of mankind is much more beneficial to society than the unreflecting might imagine. The pawnbroker, the attorney, and other pests of society, might, by proper management, be turned into serviceable members; and, were their trades abolished, it is possible the same avarice that conducts the one, or the same chicanery that characterizes the other, might, by proper regulations, be converted into frugality, and commendable prudence.

But some have made the eulogium of luxury, have represented it as the natural consequence of every country that is become rich. Did we not employ our extraordinary wealth in superfluities,
say

say they, what other means would there be to employ it in? To which it may be answered, If frugality were established in the state, if our expences were laid out rather in the necessaries than the superfluities of life, there might be fewer wants, and even fewer pleasures, but infinitely more happiness. The rich and the great would be better able to satisfy their creditors; they would be better able to marry their children, and, instead of one marriage at present, there might be two, if such regulations took place.

The imaginary calls of vanity, which in reality contribute nothing to our real felicity, would not then be attended to, while the real calls of nature might be always and universally supplied. The difference of employment in the subject is what, in reality, produces the good of society. If the subject be engaged in providing only the luxuries, the necessaries must be deficient in proportion. If neglecting the produce of our own country, our minds are set upon the productions of another, we encrease our wants, but not our means; and every new-imported delicacy for our tables, or ornament in our equipage, is a tax upon the poor.

The true interest of every government is to cultivate the necessaries, by which is always meant every happiness our own country can produce; and suppress all the luxuries, by which is meant,

on the other hand, every happiness imported from abroad. Commerce has therefore its bounds ; and every new import, instead of encouragement, should be first examined whether it be conducive to the interest of society.

Among the many publications with which the press is every day burthened, I have often wondered why we never had, as in other countries, an *Œconomical Journal*, which might at once direct to all the useful discoveries in other countries, and spread those of our own. As other journals serve to amuse the learned, or what is more often the case, to make them quarrel, while they only serve to give us the history of the mischievous world, for so I call our warriors ; or the idle world, for so may the learned be called ; they never trouble their heads about the most useful part of mankind, our peasants and our artisans ; were such a work carried into execution with proper management and just direction, it might serve as a repository for every useful improvement, and increase that knowledge which learning often serves to confound.

Sweden seems the only country where the science of oeconomy seems to have fixed its empire. In other countries, it is cultivated only by a few admirers, or by societies which have not received
sufficient

sufficient sanction to become compleatly useful ; but here there is founded a royal academy, destined to this purpose only, composed of the most learned and powerful members of the state ; an academy which declines every thing which only terminates in amusement, erudition or curiosity, and admits only of observations tending to illustrate husbandry, agriculture, and every real physical improvement. In this country nothing is left to private rapacity, but every improvement is immediately diffused, and its inventor immediately recompensed by the state. Happy were it so in other countries ; by this means every impostor would be prevented from ruining or deceiving the publick with pretended discoveries or nostrums, and every real inventor would not, by this means, suffer the inconveniences of suspicion.

In short, true œconomy, equally unknown to the prodigal and avaricious, seems to be a just mean between both extremes ; and to a transgression of this, at present decried virtue, it is that we are to attribute a great part of the evils which infest society. A taste for superfluity, amusement, and pleasure bring effeminacy, idleness, and expence in their train. But a thirst of riches is always proportioned to our debauchery, and the greatest prodigal is too frequently found to be the greatest miser ; so that the vices which seem the most opposite, are frequently

144 UPON POLITICAL FRUGALITY.

quently found to produce each other; and, to avoid both, it is only necessary to be frugal.

*Virtus est medium duorum vitiorum et utrinque
reductum. HOR.*



A R E.

A

R E S V E R I E.

SCARCE a day passes in which we do not hear compliments paid to Dryden, Pope, and other writers of the last age, while not a month comes forward that is not loaded with invective against the writers of this. Strange, that our critics should be fond of giving their favours to those who are insensible of the obligation, and their dislike to these who, of all mankind, are most apt to retaliate the injury.

Even though our present writers had not equal merit with their predecessors, it would be politic to use them with ceremony. Every compliment paid them would be more agreeable, in proportion as they least deserved it. Tell a lady with an handsome face that she is pretty, she only thinks it her due; it is what she has heard a thousand times before from others, and disregards the compliment: but assure a lady, the cut of whose visage is something more plain, that she looks killing to-day, she instantly bridles up and feels the force of the well-timed flattery the whole day after. Compliments which we think are deserved, we only accept, as debts, with indifference; but those which conscience

I.

informs

informs us we do not merit, we receive with the same gratitude that we do favours given away.

Our gentlemen, however, who preside at the distribution of literary fame, seem resolved to part with praise neither from motives of justice, or generosity; one would think, when they take pen in hand, that it was only to blot reputations, and to put their seals to the packet which consigns every new-born effort to oblivion.

Yet, notwithstanding the republic of letters hangs at present so feebly together; though those friendships which once promoted literary fame seem now to be discontinued; though every writer who now draws the quill seems to aim at profit, as well as applause, many among them are probably laying in stores for immortality, and are provided with a sufficient stock of reputation to last the whole journey.

As I was indulging these reflections, in order to eke out the present page, I could not avoid pursuing the metaphor, of going a journey, in my imagination, and formed the following Resverie too wild for allegory, and too regular for a dream.

I fancied myself placed in the yard of a large inn, in which there were an infinite number of waggons and stage coaches, attended by fellows
who

who either invited the company to take their places, or were busied in packing their baggage. Each vehicle had its inscription, shewing the place of its destination. On one I could read, *The pleasure stage-coach* ; on another, *The waggon of industry* ; on a third, *The vanity whim* ; and on a fourth, *The landau of riches*. I had some inclination to step into each of these, one after another ; but I know not by what means I passed them by, and at last fixed my eye upon a small carriage, Berlin fashion, which seemed the most convenient vehicle at a distance in the world ; and, upon my nearer approach, found it to be *The same machine*.

I instantly made up to the coachman, whom I found to be an affable and seemingly good-natured fellow. He informed me, that he had but a few days ago returned from the temple of fame, to which he had been carrying Addison, Swift, Pope, Steele, Congreve, and Colley Cibber. That they made but indifferent company by the way, and that he once or twice was going to empty his berlin of the whole cargo : however, says he, I got them all safe home, with no other damage than a black eye, which Colley gave Mr. Pope, and am now returned for another coachful. “ If
“ that be all, friend, said I, and if you are in
“ want of company, I’ll make one with all my
“ heart. Open the door ; I hope the machine
“ rides easy.” “ Oh ! for that, sir, extremely
L 2 “ easy.”

“easy.” But still keeping the door shut, and measuring me with his eye, “Pray, sir, have you
“no luggage? You seem to be a good-natured
“sort of a gentleman; but I don’t find you have
“got any luggage, and I never permit any to
“travel with me but such as have something
“valuable to pay for coach-hire.” Examining my pockets, I own I was not a little disconcerted at this unexpected rebuff; but considering that I carried a number of the BEE under my arm, I was resolved to open it in his eyes, and dazzle him with the splendor of the page. He read the title and contents, however, without any emotion, and assured me he had never heard of it before. “In short, friend, said he, now losing all his
“former respect, you must not come in. I expect better passengers; but, as you seem an
“harmless creature, perhaps, if there be room
“left, I may let you ride a while for charity.”

I now took my stand by the coachman at the door, and since I could not command a seat, was resolved to be as useful as possible, and earn by my assiduity, what I could not by my merit.

The next that presented for a place, was a most whimsical figure indeed. He was hung round with papers of his own composing, not unlike those who sing ballads in the streets, and came dancing up to the door with all the confidence of
instant

instant admittance. The volubility of his motion and address prevented my being able to read more of his cargo than the word *Inspector*, which was written in great letters at the top of some of the papers. He opened the coach-door himself without any ceremony, and was just slipping in, when the coachman, with as little ceremony, pulled him back. Our figure seemed perfectly angry at this repulse, and demanded gentleman's satisfaction. "Lord, sir! replied the coachman, "instead of proper luggage, by your bulk you "seem loaded for a West-India voyage. You are "big enough, with all your papers, to crack "twenty stage-coaches. Excuse me, indeed, sir, "for you must not enter." Our figure now began to expostulate; he assured the coachman, that though his baggage seemed so bulky, it was perfectly light, and that he would be contented with the smallest corner of room. But Jehu was inflexible, and the carrier of the inspectors was sent to dance back again, with all his papers fluttering in the wind. We expected to have no more trouble from this quarter, when, in a few minutes, the same figure changed his appearance, like harlequin upon the stage, and with the same confidence again made his approaches, dressed in lace, and carrying nothing but a nosegay. Upon coming near, he thrust the nosegay to the coachman's nose, grasped the brass, and seemed now resolved to enter by violence. I found the

struggle soon begin to grow hot, and the coachman, who was a little old, unable to continue the contest, so, in order to ingratiate myself, I stepped in to his assistance, and our united efforts sent our literary Proteus, though worsted, unconquered still, clear off, dancing a rigadon, and smelling to his own nosegay.

The person who after him appeared as candidate for a place in the stage, came up with an air not quite so confident, but somewhat however theatrical; and, instead of entering, made the coachman a very low bow, which the other returned, and desired to see his baggage; upon which he instantly produced some farces, a tragedy, and other miscellany productions. The coachman, casting his eye upon the cargoe, assured him, at present he could not possibly have a place, but hoped in time he might aspire to one, as he seemed to have read in the book of nature, without a careful perusal of which none ever found entrance at the temple of fame. “What, (replied the disappointed poet) shall my tragedy, in which I have vindicated the cause of liberty and virtue!”——“Follow nature, (returned the other) and never expect to find lasting fame by topics which only please from their popularity. Had you been first in the cause of freedom, or praised in virtue more than an empty name, it is possible you might have
“gained

“gained admittance; but at present I beg, fir,
“you will stand aside for another gentleman
“whom I see approaching.”

This was a very grave personage, whom at some distance I took for one of the most reserved, and even disagreeable figures I had seen; but as he approached, his appearance improved, and when I could distinguish him thoroughly, I perceived, that, in spite of the severity of his brow, he had one of the most good-natured countenances that could be imagined. Upon coming to open the stage door, he lifted a parcel of folios into the seat before him, but our inquisitorial coachman at once shoved them out again. “What, “not take in my dictionary! exclaimed the other “in a rage.” “Be patient, fir, (replied the “coachman) I have drove a coach, man and “boy, these two thousand years; but I do not “remember to have carried above one dictionary “during the whole time. That little book “which I perceive peeping from one of your “pockets, may I presume to ask what it contains?” “A mere trifle, (replied the author) “it is called the Rambler.” “The Rambler! “(says the coachman) I beg, fir, you’ll take “your place; I have heard our ladies in the “court of Apollo frequently mention it with “rapture; and Clio, who happens to be a little “grave, has been heard to prefer it to the

“ Spectator ; though others have observed, that
“ the reflections, by being refined, sometimes
“ become minute.”

This grave gentleman was scarce seated, when another, whose appearance was something more modern, seemed willing to enter, yet afraid to ask. He carried in his hand a bundle of essays, of which the coachman was curious enough to enquire the contents. “ These (replied the gentleman) are rhapsodies against the religion of my country.” “ And how can you expect to come into my coach, after thus chusing the wrong side of the question.” “ Ay, but I am right (replied the other ;) and if you give me leave, I shall in a few minutes state the argument.” “ Right or wrong (said the coachman) he who disturbs religion, is a blockhead, and he shall never travel in a coach of mine.” “ If then (said the gentleman, mustering up all his courage) if I am not to have admittance as an essayist, I hope I shall not be repulsed as an historian ; the last volume of my history met with applause.” “ Yes, (replied the coachman) but I have heard only the first approved at the temple of fame ; and as I see you have it about you, enter without further ceremony.” My attention was now diverted to a crowd, who were pushing forward a person that seemed more inclined to the
stage

stage coach of riches; but by their means he was driven forward to the same machine, which he, however, seemed heartily to despise. Impelled, however, by their sollicitations, he steps up, flourishing a voluminous history, and demanding admittance. "Sir, I have formerly heard your name mentioned (says the coachman) but "never as an historian. Is there no other "work upon which you may claim a place?" "None, replied the other, except a romance; "but this is a work of too trifling a nature to "claim future attention." "You mistake (says the "inquisitor) a well-written romance is no such "easy task as is generally imagined. I remember formerly to have carried Cervantes and Segrais, and if you think fit, you may enter." Upon our three literary travellers coming into the same coach, I listened attentively to hear what might be the conversation that passed upon this extraordinary occasion; when, instead of agreeable or entertaining dialogue, I found them grumbling at each other, and each seemed discontented with his companions. Strange! thought I to myself, that they who are thus born to enlighten the world, should still preserve the narrow prejudices of childhood, and, by disagreeing, make even the highest merit ridiculous. Were the learned and the wise to unite against the dunces of society, instead of sometimes siding into opposite parties with them, they might throw a lustre upon

upon each other's reputation, and teach every rank of subordinate merit, if not to admire, at least not to avow dislike.

In the midst of these reflections, I perceived the coachman, unmindful of me, had now mounted the box. Several were approaching to be taken in, whose pretensions I was sensible were very just, I therefore desired him to stop, and take in more passengers; but he replied, as he had now mounted the box, it would be improper to come down; but that he should take them all, one after the other, when he should return. So he drove away, and, for myself, as I could not get in, I mounted behind, in order to hear the conversation on the way.

[*To be continued.*]

A Word or two on the late FARCE,

CALLED

HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

JUST as I had expected, before I saw this farce, I found it, formed on too narrow a plan to afford a pleasing variety. The sameness of the humour in every scene could not at last fail of being disagreeable. The poor, affecting the manners of the rich, might be carried on thro' one

one character or two at the most, with great propriety ; but to have almost every personage on the scene almost of the same character, and reflecting the follies of each other, was unartful in the poet to the last degree.

The scene was also almost a continuation of the same absurdity ; and my Lord Duke and Sir Harry (two footmen who assume these characters) have nothing else to *do* but to talk like their masters, and are only introduced to speak, and to shew themselves. Thus, as there is a sameness of character, there is a barrenness of incident, which, by a very small share of address, the poet might have easily avoided.

From a conformity to critic rules, which, perhaps, on the whole, have done more harm than good, our author has sacrificed all the vivacity of the dialogue to nature ; and though he makes his characters talk like servants, they are seldom absurd enough, or lively enough, to make us merry. Though he is always natural, he happens seldom to be humorous.

The satire was well intended, if we regard it as being masters ourselves ; but, probably, a philosopher would rejoice in that liberty which Englishmen give their domestics ; and, for my own part, I cannot avoid being pleased at the
happiness

happiness of those poor creatures, who, in some measure, contribute to mine. The Athenians, the politest and best-natured people upon earth, were the kindest to their slaves ; and if a person may judge, who has seen the world, our English servants are the best treated, because the generality of our English gentlemen, are the politest under the sun.

But not to lift my feeble voice among the pack of critics, who, probably, have no other occupation but that of cutting up every thing new. I must own, there are one or two scenes that are fine satire, and sufficiently humorous ; particularly the first interview between the two footmen, which, at once, ridicules the manners of the great, and the absurdity of their imitators.

Whatever defects there might be in the composition, there were none in the action ; in this the performers shewed more humour than I had fancied them capable of. Mr. Palmer and Mr. King were entirely what they desired to represent ; and Mrs. Clive (but what need I talk of her, since, without the least exaggeration, she has more true humour than any actor or actress upon the English or any other stage I have seen ;) she, I say, did the part all the justice it was capable of. And, upon the whole, a farce, which has only this to recommend it, that the author took his plan from the volume of nature, by the sprightly manner in which it was performed, was, for one night, a tolerable entertainment. Thus much
may

may be said in its vindication, that people of fashion seemed more pleased in the representation than the subordinate ranks of people.

U P O N U N F O R T U N A T E M E R I T.

EVERY age seems to have its favourite pursuits, which serve to amuse the idle, and relieve the attention of the industrious. Happy the man who is born excellent in the pursuit in vogue, and whose genius seems adapted to the times he lives in. How many do we see, who might have excelled in arts or sciences, and who seem furnished with talents equal to the greatest discoveries, had the road not been already beaten by their predecessors, and nothing left for them, except trifles to discover, while others, of very moderate abilities, become famous, because happening to be first in the reigning pursuit.

Thus, at the renewal of letters in Europe, the taste was not to compose new books, but to comment on the old ones. It was not to be expected that new books should be written, when there were so many of the Ancients, either not known, or not understood. It was not reasonable to attempt new conquests, while they had such an extensive region lying waste for want of cultivation. At that period, criticism and erudition were the reigning studies of the times; and he, who had only an inventive genius, might have languished

languished in hopeless obscurity. When the writers of antiquity were sufficiently explained and known, the learned set about imitating them : From hence proceeded the number of latin orators, poets and historians, in the reigns of Clement the seventh, and Alexander the sixth. This passion for antiquity lasted for many years, to the utter exclusion of every other pursuit, till some began to find, that those works which were imitated from nature, were more like the writings of antiquity, than even those written in express imitation. It was then modern language began to be cultivated with assiduity, and our poets and orators poured forth their wonders upon the world.

As writers become more numerous, it is natural for readers to become more indolent ; from whence must necessarily arise a desire of attaining knowledge with the greatest possible ease. No science or art offers its instruction and amusement in so obvious a manner as statuary and painting. From hence we see, that a desire of cultivating those arts generally attends the decline of science. Thus the finest statues, and the most beautiful paintings of antiquity preceded but a little the absolute decay of every other science. The statues of Antoninus, Comodus, and their cotemporaries, are the finest productions of the chissel, and appeared but just before learning was destroyed by comment, criticism, and barbarous invasions.

What happened in Rome may probably be the case with us at home. Our nobility are now more
solicitous

solicitous in patronizing painters and sculptors than those of any other polite profession ; and from the lord, who has his gallery, down to the 'prentice, who has his twopenny copper-plate, all are admirers of this art. The great, by their careſſes, ſeem inſenſible to all other merit but that of the pencil ; and the vulgar buy every book rather from the excellence of the ſculptor than the writer.

How happy were it now, if men of real excellence in that profeſſion were to ariſe ! Were the painters of Italy now to appear, who once wandered like beggars from one city to another, and produce their almoſt breathing figures, what rewards might they not expect ! But many of them lived without rewards, and therefore rewards alone will never produce their equals. We have often found the great exert themſelves not only without promotion, but in ſpite of oppoſition. We have found them flouriſhing, like medicinal plants, in a region of ſavageness and barbarity, their excellence unknown, and their virtues unheeded.

They who have ſeen the paintings of Caravaggio are ſenſible of the ſurpriſing impreſſion they make ; bold, ſwelling, terrible to the laſt degree ; all ſeem animated, and ſpeaks him among the foremoſt of his profeſſion ; yet this man's fortune and his fame ſeemed ever in oppoſition to each other.

Unknowing how to flatter the great, he was driven from city to city in the utmoſt indigence, and might truly be ſaid to paint for his bread.

Having

Having one day insulted a person of distinction, who refused to pay him all the respect which he thought his due, he was obliged to leave Rome, and travel on foot, his usual method of going his journeys down into the country, without either money or friends to subsist him.

After he had travelled in this manner as long as his strength would permit, faint with famine and fatigue, he at last called at an obscure inn by the way side. The host knew, by the appearance of his guest, his indifferent circumstances, and refused to furnish him a dinner without previous payment.

As Caravagio was entirely destitute of money, he took down the innkeeper's sign, and painted it anew for his dinner.

Thus refreshed, he proceeded on his journey, and left the innkeeper not quite satisfied with this method of payment. Some company of distinction, however, coming soon after, and struck with the beauty of the new sign, bought it at an advanced price, and astonished the innkeeper with their generosity; he was resolved, therefore, to get as many signs as possible drawn by the same artist, as he found he could sell them to good advantage; and accordingly set out after Caravagio, in order to bring him back. It was night-fall before he came up to the place, where the unfortunate Caravagio lay dead by the road side, overcome by fatigue, resentment and despair.



The B E E.

NUMBER VI.

SATURDAY, *November 10*, 1759.

On EDUCATION.

To the AUTHOR of the B E E.

S I R,



S few subjects are more interesting to society, so few have been more frequently written upon, than the education of youth. Yet is it not a little surprizing, that it should have been treated almost by all in a declamatory manner? They have insisted largely on the advantages that result from it, both to the individual and to society, and have expatiated in
M the

the praise of what none have ever been so hardy as to call in question.

Instead of giving us fine, but empty harangues, upon this subject, instead of indulging each his particular and whimsical systems, it had been much better if the writers on this subject had treated it in a more scientific manner, repressed all the fallies of imagination, and given us the result of their observations with didactic simplicity. Upon this subject, the smallest errors are of the most dangerous consequence; and the author should venture the imputation of stupidity upon a topic, where his slightest deviations may tend to injure the rising generation.

I shall, therefore, throw out a few thoughts upon this subject, which have not been attended to by others, and shall dismiss all attempts to please, while I study only instruction.

The manner in which our youth of London are at present educated is, some in free schools in the city, but the far greater number in boarding schools about town. The parent justly consults the health of his child, and finds an education in the country tends to promote this, much more than a continuance in town. Thus far they are right; if there were a possibility of having even our free schools kept a little out of town, it
would

would certainly conduce to the health and vigour of, perhaps, the mind, as well as the body. It may be thought whimsical, but it is truth; I have found by experience, that they, who have spent all their lives in cities, contract not only an effeminacy of habit, but even of thinking.

But when I have said, that the boarding schools are preferable to free schools, as being in the country, this is certainly the only advantage I can allow them, otherwise it is impossible to conceive the ignorance of those who take upon them the important trust of education. Is any man unfit for any of the professions; he finds his last resource in setting up school. Do any become bankrupts in trade. They still set up a boarding school, and drive a trade this way, when all others fail: Nay, I have been told of butchers and barbers, who have turned schoolmasters; and more surprising still, made fortunes in their new profession.

Could we think ourselves in a country of civilized people; could it be conceived that we have any regard for posterity, when such are permitted to take the charge of the morals, genius and health of those dear little pledges, who may one day be the guardians of the liberties of Europe, and who may serve as the honour and bulwark of their aged parents? The care of our children, is it

below the state? is it fit to indulge the caprice of the ignorant with the disposal of their children in this particular? For the state to take the charge of all its children, as in Persia or Sparta, might at present be inconvenient; but surely, with great ease, it might cast an eye to their instructors. Of all members of society, I do not know a more useful, or a more honourable one, than a school-master; at the same time that I do not see any more generally despised, or whose talents are so ill rewarded.

Were the salaries of school masters to be augmented from a diminution of useless fine cures, how might it turn to the advantage of this people; a people whom, without flattery, I may, in other respects, term the wisest and greatest upon earth. But while I would reward the deserving, I would dismiss those utterly unqualified for their employment: In short, I would make the business of a school master every way more respectable, by encreasing their salaries, and admitting only men of proper abilities.

There are already school masters appointed, and they have some small salaries; but where at present there is but one school master appointed, there should at least be two; and wherever the salary is at present twenty pounds, it should be an hundred. Do we give immoderate benefices to

to those who instruct ourselves, and shall we deny even subsistence to those who instruct our children. Every member of society should be paid in proportion as he is necessary ; and I will be bold enough to say, that school masters in a state, are more necessary than clergymen, as children stand in more need of instruction than their parents.

But instead of this, as I have already observed, we send them to board in the country to the most ignorant set of men that can be imagined. But least the ignorance of the master be not sufficient, the child is generally consigned to the usher. This is generally some poor needy animal, little superior to a footman either in learning or spirit, invited to his place by an advertisement, and kept there merely from his being of a complying disposition, and making the children fond of him. *You give your child to be educated to a slave, says a philosopher to a rich man ; Instead of one slave, you will then have two.*

It were well, however, if parents, upon fixing their children in one of these houses, would examine the abilities of the usher as well as the master ; for, whatever they are told to the contrary, the usher is generally the person most employed in their education. If then, a gentleman, upon putting out his son to one of these houses, sees the usher disregarded by the master, he may

depend upon it, that he is equally disregarded by the boys; the truth is, in spite of all their endeavours to please, they are generally the laughing stock of the school. Every trick is played upon the usher; the oddity of his manners, his dress, or his language, are a fund of eternal ridicule; the master himself now and then cannot avoid joining in the laugh, and the poor wretch, eternally resenting this ill usage, seems to live in a state of war with all the family. This is a very proper person, is it not, to give children a relish for learning? They must esteem learning very much, when they see its professors used with such ceremony. If the usher be despised, the father may be assured his child will never be properly instructed.

But let me suppose, that there are some schools without these inconveniencies, where the master and ushers are men of learning, reputation and assiduity. If there are to be found such, they cannot be prized in a state sufficiently. A boy will learn more true wisdom in a public school in a year, than by a private education in five. It is not from masters, but from their equals, youth learn a knowledge of the world; the little tricks they play each other, the punishment that frequently attends the commission, is a just picture of the great world, and all the ways of men are practised in a public school in miniature. It is true,

true, a child is early made acquainted with some vices in a school, but it is better to know these when a boy, than be first taught them when a man, for their novelty then may have irresistible charms.

In a public education, boys early learn temperance ; and if the parents and friends would give them less money upon their usual visits, it would be much to their advantage, since it may justly be said, that a great part of their disorders arise from surfeit, *Plus occidit gula quam gladius*. And now I am come to the article of health, it may not be amiss to observe, that Mr. Locke, and some others, have advised that children should be inured to cold, to fatigue, and hardship, from their youth ; but Mr. Locke was but an indifferent physician. Habit, I grant, has great influence over our constitutions, but we have not precise ideas upon this subject.

We know, that among savages, and even among our peasants, there are found children born with such constitutions, that they cross rivers by swimming, endure cold, thirst, hunger, and want of sleep, to a surprizing degree ; that when they happen to fall sick, they are cured without the help of medicine, by nature alone. Such examples are adduced to persuade us to imitate their manner of education, and accustom

ourselves betimes to support the same fatigues. But had these gentlemen considered first, that those savages and peasants are generally not so long lived as they who have led a more indolent life : Secondly, that the more laborious the life is, the less populous is the country. Had they considered, that what physicians call the *flamina vitæ*, by fatigue and labour, become rigid, and thus anticipate old age. That the number who survive those rude trials, bears no proportion to those who die in the experiment. Had these things been properly considered, they would not have thus extolled an education begun in fatigue and hardships. Peter the Great, willing to enure the children of his seamen to a life of hardship, ordered that they should only drink sea water, but they unfortunately all died under the experiment.

But while I would exclude all unnecessary labours, yet still I would recommend temperance in the highest degree. No luxurious dishes with high seasoning, nothing given children to force an appetite, as little sugared or salted provisions as possible, though never so pleasing ; but milk, morning and night, should be their constant food. This diet would make them more healthy than any of those slops that are usually cooked by the mistress of a boarding school ; besides, it corrects
any

any consumptive habits, not unfrequently found amongst the children of city parents.

As boys should be educated with temperance, so the first greatest lesson that should be taught them is, to admire frugality. It is by the exercise of this virtue alone, they can ever expect to be useful members of society. It is true, lectures continually repeated upon this subject, may make some boys when they grow up, run into an extreme, and become misers; but it were well, had we more misers than we have among us. I know few characters more useful in society, for a man's having a larger or smaller share of money lying useless by him, no way injures the commonwealth; since, should every miser now exhaust his stores, this might make gold more plenty, but it would not encrease the commodities or pleasures of life; they would still remain as they are at present; it matters not, therefore, whether men are misers or not, if they be only frugal, laborious, and fill the station they have chosen. If they deny themselves the necessaries of life, society is no way injured by their folly.

Instead, therefore, of romances, which praise young men of spirit, who go through a variety of adventures, and at last conclude a life of dissipation, folly, and extravagance in riches and matrimony, there should be some men of wit employed
to

to compose books that might equally interest the passions of our youth, where such an one might be praised for having resisted allurements when young, and how he at last became lord mayor ; how he was married to a lady of great sense, fortune, and beauty ; to be as explicit as possible, the old story of Whittington, were his cat left out, might be more serviceable to the tender mind, than either Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, or an hundred others, where frugality is the only good quality the hero is not possessed of. Were our school-masters, if any of them have sense enough to draw up such a work, thus employed it would be much more serviceable to their pupils than all the grammars and dictionaries they may publish these ten years.

Children should early be instructed in the arts from which they would afterwards draw the greatest advantages. When the wonders of nature are never exposed to our view, we have no great desire to become acquainted with those parts of learning which pretend to account for the phenomena. One of the ancients complains, that as soon as young men have left school, and are obliged to converse in the world, they fancy themselves transported into a new region. *Ut cum in forum venerarint existiment se in alium terrum orbem delatos.* We should early, therefore, instruct them in the experiments, if I may so express

press it, of knowledge, and leave to maturer age the accounting for the causes. But, instead of that, when boys begin natural philosophy in colleges, they have not the least curiosity for those parts of the science which are proposed for their instruction; they have never before seen the phenomena, and consequently have no curiosity to learn the reasons. Might natural philosophy, therefore, be made their pastime in school, by this means it would in college become their amusement.

In several of the machines now in use, there would be ample field both for instruction and amusement; the different sorts of the phosphorus, the artificial pyrites, magnetism, electricity, the experiments upon the rarefaction and weight of the air, and those upon elastic bodies, might employ their idle hours, and none should be called from play to see such experiments but such as thought proper. At first then it would be sufficient if the instruments, and the effects of their combination, were only shewn; the causes should be deferred to a maturer age, or to those times when natural curiosity prompts us to discover the wonders of nature. Man is placed in this world as a spectator; when he is tired with wondering at all the novelties about him, and not till then, does he desire to be made acquainted with the causes that create those wonders.

What

What I have observed with regard to natural philosophy, I would extend to every other science whatsoever. We should teach them as many of the facts as were possible, and defer the causes until they seemed of themselves desirous of knowing them. A mind thus leaving school, stored with all the simple experiences of science, would be the fittest in the world for the college course; and though such a youth might not appear so bright, or so talkative, as those who had learned the real principles and causes of some of the sciences, yet he would make a wiser man, and would retain a more lasting passion for letters than he who was early burdened with the disagreeable institution of effect and cause.

In history, such stories alone should be laid before them as might catch the imagination; instead of this, they are too frequently obliged to toil through the four empires, as they are called, where their memories are burdened by a number of disgusting names, that destroy all their future relish for our best historians, who may be termed the truest teachers of wisdom.

Every species of flattery should be carefully avoided; a boy who happens to say a sprightly thing is generally applauded so much, that he happens to continue a coxcomb sometimes all his life after. He is reputed a wit at fourteen, and
becomes

becomes a blockhead at twenty. Nurses, footmen, and such, should therefore be driven away as much as possible. I was even going to add, that the mother herself should stifle her pleasure, or her vanity, when little master happens to say a good or a smart thing. Those modest lubberly boys, who seem to want spirit, generally go through their business with more ease to themselves, and more satisfaction to their instructors.

There has of late a gentleman appeared, who thinks the study of rhetoric essential to a perfect education. That bold male eloquence, which often, without pleasing, convinces, is generally destroyed by such institutions. Convincing eloquence, however, is infinitely more serviceable to its possessor than the most florid harangue or the most pathetic tones that can be imagined; and the man who is thoroughly convinced himself who understands his subject, and the language he speaks in, will be more apt to silence opposition, than he who studies the force of his periods, and fills our ears with sounds, while our minds are destitute of conviction.

It was reckoned the fault of the orators at the decline of the Roman empire, when they had been long instructed by rhetoricians, that their periods were so harmonious, as that they could be sung as well as spoken. What a ridiculous figure
must

must one of these gentlemen cut, thus measuring syllables, and weighing words, when he should plead the cause of his client ! Two architects were once candidates for the building a certain temple at Athens ; the first harangued the crowd very learnedly upon the different orders of architecture, and shewed them in what manner the temple should be built ; the other, who got up to speak after him, only observed, that what his brother had spoken he could do ; and thus he at once gained his cause.

To teach men to be orators, is little less than to teach them to be poets ; and for my part, I should have too great a regard for my child, to wish him a manor only in a bookseller's shop.

Another passion which the present age is apt to run into, is to make children learn all things ; the languages, the sciences, music, the exercises, and painting. Thus the child soon becomes a *talker* in all, but a *master* in none. He thus acquires a superficial fondness for every thing, and only shews his ignorance when he attempts to exhibit his skill.

As I deliver my thoughts without method or connection, so the reader must not be surprized to find me once more addressing schoolmasters on the present method

method of teaching the learned languages, which is commonly by literal translations. I would ask such, if they were to travel a journey, whether those parts of the road in which they found the greatest difficulties would not be most strongly remembered? Boys, who, if I may continue the allusion, gallop through one of the ancients with the assistance of a translation, can have but a very slight acquaintance either with the author or his language. It is by the exercise of the mind alone that a language is learned; but a literal translation, on the opposite page, leaves no exercise for the memory at all. The boy will not be at the fatigue of remembering, when his doubts are at once satisfied by a glance of the eye; whereas were every word to be sought from a dictionary, the learner would attempt to remember them, to save him the trouble of looking out for it for the future.

To continue in the same pedantic strain, tho' no schoolmaster, of all the various grammars now taught in the schools about town, I would recommend only the old common one; I have forgot whether Lily's, or an emendation of him. The others may be improvements; but such improvements seem, to me, only mere grammatical niceties, no way influencing the learner, but perhaps loading him with trifling subtilties, which,
at

at a proper age, he must be at some pains to forget.

Whatever pains a master may take to make the learning of the languages agreeable to his pupil, he may depend upon it, it will be at first extremely unpleasant. The rudiments of every language, therefore, must be given as a task, not as an amusement. Attempting to deceive children into instruction of this kind, is only deceiving ourselves; and I know no passion capable of conquering a child's natural laziness but fear. Solomon has said it before me; nor is there any more certain, tho' perhaps more disagreeable truth, than the proverb in verse, too well known to repeat on the present occasion. It is very probable that parents are told of some masters who never use the rod, and consequently are thought the properest instructors for their children; but though tenderness is a requisite quality in an instructor, yet there is too often the truest tenderness in well-timed correction.

Some have justly observed, that all passion should be banished on this terrible occasion; but I know not, there is a frailty attending human nature, that few masters are able to keep their temper whilst they correct. I knew a good-natured man, who was sensible of his own weakness in this respect, and consequently had recourse

to the following expedient to prevent his passions from being engaged, yet at the same time administer justice with impartiality. When ever any of his pupils committed a fault, he summoned a jury of his peers, I mean of the boys of his own or the next classes to him ; his accusers stood forth ; he had a liberty of pleading in his own defence, and one or two more had a liberty of pleading against him : when found guilty by the pannel, he was consigned to the footman, who attended in the house, who had previous orders to use his punishment with lenity. By this means the master took off the odium of punishment from himself ; and the footman, between whom and the boys there could not be even the slightest intimacy, was placed in such a light as to be shunned by every boy in school.

And now I have gone thus far, perhaps you will think me some pedagogue, willing, by a well-timed puff, to encrease the reputation of his own school ; but such is not the case. The regard I have for society, for those tender minds who are the objects of the present essay, such are the only motives I have for offering those thoughts, calculated not to surprize by their novelty, or the elegance of composition, but merely to remedy some defects which have crept into the present system of school education. If this letter should be inserted, perhaps I may trouble you, in my next, with some thoughts upon an university education, not with an intent to exhaust the subject, but to amend some few abuses. I am, &c.

N

O N

(178)

ON THE
CONTRADICTIONS
OF THE
W O R L D.
FROM
V O L T A I R E.

THE more we know of the world, the more we see of its absurdities and contradictions. To begin with the grand seignior; he generally cuts off every head that displeases him, and can seldom preserve his own.

If from the turk we make a natural transition to the pope, he confirms the election of emperors, he has even kings for vassals, yet is not so powerful as any one of their ministers. He issues out orders for America and Africa; yet is not able to deprive even the little republic of Lucca of its privileges. The emperor is sometimes king of the Romans; but his only privileges consist in holding the pope's stirrup, and presenting him with the basin while he washes.

The

The English serve their kings upon the knee; but they are often found to depose them, to imprison them, and bring some of them to the scaffold.

Bishops and monks, who make vows of poverty, in consequence of such vows receive immoderate incomes; and, by virtue of their professed humility, become despotic princes.

Men who are convicted of not conforming to the religion of their country, are burned in the market place; while the second eclogue of Virgil, which contains the most shocking obscenities, is gravely commented upon and taught by those very strenuous asserters of the divinity.

If a poor philosopher, who imagines no mischief, should teach that the earth takes an annual revolution, or that all light proceeds from the sun, should he assert that matter may have several properties, which we are entirely unacquainted with, he is at once branded with impiety, and as a disturber of public tranquility; our modern philosophers are discouraged from delivering their sentiments, while the Tusculan questions of Cicero, and the works of Lucretius, which contain a complete course of irreligion, are put into the hands of our youth, and cried up as models for imitation.

Bayle, the sceptic philosopher, was persecuted even in Holland. Le Vayer, a greater sceptic, and a much inferior philosopher, was constituted the king's preceptor. Nay, France has seen her ambassadors burnt in effigy in the streets of Paris, and the very next day honoured with the royal instructions.

The famous atheist Spinoza lived and died in peace. Vanini, who wrote only against Aristotle, was burnt as an atheist. With this appellation he is branded in all the histories of the works of the learned, and biographical dictionaries. those immense archives of folly and falsehood. Consult any of these, and you will find that Vanini not only publicly taught atheism by his writings, but also that twelve of his disciples left Naples with him, in order to assist in making proselytes. After consulting those anecdotes, next consult his own works, and you will be surprised to find them replete with proofs of the existence of a God. He thus speaks in his *Amphitheatrum*, a work equally condemned and unknown.

“ God is the beginning and end, and the parent of all that was or will be ; he always exists, but not in time. To him the past has not fled, and the future will not arrive. He reigns everywhere, without being in any place ; motionless,

“less, without being fixed ; rapid, without passing. He is all, and above all ; he is in all, but without being confined ; without all, but not excluded. Good, but without quality ; great, but without quantity ; entire, without parts ; unchangeable, yet diversified in every part of the universe. His will is his power, simple ; there is no possibility with him, but all really is. In a word, being all, he is above all beings, being actually present, and existing in all.”

After such a confession of faith, could we think it, Vanini was declared an atheist ! What were the motives to condemn him ? Nothing more than the bare deposition of one Francon. In vain did his books bear witness to the falsehood of the deposer ; one single enemy has cost him his life, and tarnished his character through all Europe.

Should I continue to examine the contradictions which are to be found in the republic of letters, I might, perhaps, be obliged to write the history of all the scholars and the wits of the age. Should I extend my survey to society, I might be obliged to write the history of Europe. Should an Asiatic come among us, what judgment could he form of our religion ! Or would he not think that of Paganism still continued ! The days of the week still retain the names of heathen deities, our

N 3

churches

churches are filled with the statues of the gods of the ancients ; and should he sometimes be a spectator at our theatres, he might mistake the scene for a temple to their honour, and our assiduity for devotion.

In Spain, our Asiatic would be surprised to find severe laws, which forbid strangers carrying on any commerce to America ; and yet he might see strangers alone in possession of that prohibited trade ; and the Spaniards, in effect, no more than factors to others, whom they enrich, while they continue in poverty. How would he be surprised to find our actors stiled vagabonds by law, yet encouraged by the great, and kept company with as equals ! He would find the press loaded with works which every one condemns, and yet all are eager to purchase. He would every where find our customs in opposition to our statutes. He might probably laugh at our absurdities ; yet, should we take a voyage into Asia, we might see the same absurdities practised with very little variation.

Men are every where equally fools ; they have made laws in the same manner that breaches are repaired in the walls of a city. In one country, the elder sons have all the fortune from the rest ; in another, the fortune is equally divided amongst them all. At one time, the church commands duelling ; at another, it excommunicates all who
venture

venture in single combat. They have, at times, excommunicated the partizans and the opposers of Aristotle; those who wore long hair, and those who wore short.

We have, in this world, but one inviolable body of law, which is never infringed; I mean the laws of gaming. These never admit of exception, change, or subordination. If a man who was once a footman plays with a king, he is immediately paid, when he wins, without hesitation. Such is always the rule in this; in all other affairs, the sword is the only law, where the strong cut the weak into a thousand pieces.

Notwithstanding this, the world subsists as if all things were well ordered, and irregularity seems suited to our natures. Our political world resembles our globe, a great regular irregularity. It would be folly to expect to see our mountains, seas, and rivers assume beautiful mathematical figures; it would still be a greater folly to expect perfect wisdom in society.



(184)

ON THE
I N S T A B I L I T Y
O F
WORLDLY GRANDEUR.

AN alehouse-keeper, near Islington, who had long lived at the sign of the French king, upon the commencement of the last war with France, pulled down his old sign, and put up the queen of Hungary. Under the influence of her red face and golden sceptre, he continued to sell ale, till she was no longer the favourite of his customers; he changed her, therefore, some time ago, for the king of Prussia, who may probably be changed in turn for the next great man that shall be set up for vulgar admiration.

Our publican, in this, imitates the great exactly, who deal out their figures one after the other, to the gazing crowd beneath them. When we have sufficiently wondered at one, that is taken in, and another exhibited in its room, which seldom holds its station long; for the mob are ever pleased with variety.

I must own I have such an indifferent opinion of the vulgar, that I am ever led to suspect that
merit

merit which raises their shout; at least I am certain to find those great, and sometimes good men, who find satisfaction in such acclamations, made worse by it; and history has too frequently taught me, that the head which has grown this day giddy with the roar of the million, has the very next been fixed upon a pole.

As Alexander VI. was entering a little town in the neighbourhood of Rome, which had been just evacuated by the enemy, he perceived the townsmen busy in the market-place in pulling down from a gibbet a figure which had been designed to represent himself. There were also some knocking down a neighbouring statue of one of the Orfini family, with whom he was at war, in order to put Alexander's effigy, when taken down, in its place. It is possible a man who knew less of the world would have condemned the adulation of those barefaced flatterers; but Alexander seemed pleased at their zeal, and turning to Borgia, his son, said with a smile, *Vides mi fili quam leve delictum palibulum inter et statuum.* "You see, my son, the small difference between a gibbet and a statue. If the great could be taught any lesson, this might serve to teach them upon how weak a foundation their glory stands, which is built upon popular applause; for as such praise what seems like merit, they as quickly condemn what has only the appearance of guilt.

Popular glory is a perfect coquet; her lovers must toil, feel every inquietude, indulge every caprice, and, perhaps, at last, be jilted into the bargain. True glory, on the other hand, resembles a woman of sense; her admirers must play no tricks; they feel no great anxiety, for they are sure, in the end, of being rewarded in proportion to their merit. When Swift used to appear in public, he generally had the mob shouting in his train. *Pox take these fools* (he would say) *how much joy might all this bawling give my Lord Mayor.*

We have seen those virtues which have, while living, retired from the public eye, generally transmitted to posterity, as the truest objects of admiration and praise. Perhaps, the character of the late Duke of Marlborough may one day be set up, even above that of his more talked-of predecessor; since an assemblage of all the mild and amiable virtues, are far superior to those vulgarly called the great ones. I must be pardoned for this short tribute to the memory of a man, who, while living, would as much detest to receive any thing that wore the appearance of flattery, as I should to offer it.

I know not how to turn so trite a subject out of the beaten road of common place, except by illustrating it, rather by the assistance of my memory than my judgment, and instead of making reflections by telling a story.

A Chi-

A Chinese, who had long studied the works of Confucius ; who knew the characters of fourteen thousand words, and could read a great part of every book that came in his way, once took it into his head to travel into Europe, and observe the customs of a people whom he thought not very much inferior, even to his own countrymen, in the arts of refining upon every pleasure. Upon his arrival at Amsterdam, his passion for letters naturally led him to a bookseller's shop ; and, as he could speak a little Dutch, he civilly asked the bookseller for the works of the immortal Illoxosou. The bookseller assured him, he had never heard the book mentioned before. " What, have you
" never heard of that immortal poet, (returned
" the other, much surprized) that light of the
" eyes, that favourite of kings, that rose of
" perfection. I suppose you know nothing of
" the immortal Fipsihihi, second cousin to the
" moon ?" " Nothing at all, indeed, Sir,
" (returned the other.)" " Alas, (cries our
" traveller) to what purpose, then, has one
" of these fasted to death, and the other offered
" himself up as a sacrifice to the Tartarean
" enemy, to gain a renown which has never
" travelled beyond the precincts of China."

There is scarce a village in Europe, and not one university, that is not thus furnished with its little great men. The head of a petty corporation, who

who opposes the designs of a prince, who would tyrannically force his subjects to save their best cloaths for Sundays ; the puny pedant, who finds one undiscovered property in the polype, describes an unheeded process in the skeleton of a mole, and whose mind, like his microscope, perceives nature only in detail ; the rhymmer, who makes smooth verses, and paints to our imagination when he should only speak to our hearts, all equally fancy themselves walking forward to immortality, and desire the crowd behind them to look on. The crowd takes them at their word. Patriot, philosopher and poet, are shouted in their train. Where was there ever so much merit seen ; no times so important as our own ; ages, yet unborn, shall gaze with wonder and applause ! To such music, the important pigmy moves forward, bustling and swelling, and aptly compared to a *puddle in a storm*.

I have lived to see generals who once had crowds halloing after them wherever they went, who were bepraised by news papers and magazines, those echoes of the voice of the vulgar, and yet they have long sunk into merited obscurity, with scarce even an epitaph left to flatter. A few years ago the herring fishery employed all Grub-street ; it was the topic in every coffee-house, and the burthen of every ballad. We were to drag up *oceans* of gold from the bottom of the sea ; we
were

were to supply all Europe with herrings upon our own terms. At present, we hear no more of all this. We have fished up very little gold that I can learn; nor do we furnish the world with herrings, as was expected. *Let us wait but a few years longer, and we shall find all our expectations on herring fishery.*



SOME

(190)

SOME

A C C O U N T

OF THE

ACADEMIES of ITALY.

THERE is not, perhaps, a country in Europe, in which learning is so fast upon the decline as in Italy; yet not one in which there are such a number of academies instituted for its support. There is scarce a considerable town in the whole country, which has not one or two institutions of this nature, where the learned, as they are pleased to call themselves, meet to harangue, to compliment each other, and praise the utility of their institution.

Jarchius has taken the trouble to give us a list of those clubs, or academies, which amount to five hundred and fifty, each distinguished by somewhat whimsical in the name. The academicians of Bologna, for instance, are divided into the *Abbandonati*, the *Ausioli*, *Ociosi*, *Arcadi*, *Confusi*, *Dubbiosi*, &c. There are few of these who have not published their transactions, and scarce a member who is not looked upon as the most famous man in the world, at home.

Of all those societies, I know of none whose works are worth being known out of the precincts of the city in which they were written, except
the

Account of the Academies of ITALY: 191

the Cicalata Academica (or, as we might express it, the tickling society) of Florence. I have just now before me a manuscript oration, spoken by the late Tomaso Crudeli, at that society, which will, at once, serve to give a better picture of the manner in which men of wit amuse themselves in that country, than any thing I could say upon the occasion. The oration is this:

“The younger the nymph, my dear companions, the more happy the lover. From fourteen to seventeen, you are sure of finding love for love; from seventeen to twenty one, there is always a mixture of interest and affection. But when that period is past, no longer expect to receive, but to buy. No longer expect a nymph who gives, but who sells her favours. At this age, every glance is taught its duty; not a look, not a sigh, without design; the lady, like a skilful warrior, aims at the heart of another, while she shields her own from danger.

On the contrary, at fifteen, you may expect nothing but simplicity, innocence and nature. The passions are then sincere; the soul seems seated in the lips; the dear object feels present happiness, without being anxious for the future; her eyes brighten if her lover approaches; her smiles are borrowed from the graces, and her very mistakes seem to complete her desires.

Lucretia was just sixteen. The rose and lilly took possession of her face, and her bosom, by its hue and its coldness, seemed covered with
snow

snow. So much beauty, and so much virtue,
 seldom want admirers. Orlandino, a youth of
 sense and merit, was among the number. He
 had long languished for an opportunity of declaring
 his passion, when Cupid, as if willing to indulge
 his happiness, brought the charming young couple
 by mere accident to an arbour, where every pry-
 ing eye, but that of love, was absent. Orlan-
 dino talked of the sincerity of his passion, and
 mixed flattery with his addresses; but it was all
 in vain. The nymph was pre-engaged, and had
 long devoted to heaven those charms for which he
 sued. "My dear Orlandino, said she, you
 " know I have long been dedicated to St. Cathe-
 " rine, and to her belongs all that lies below my
 " girdle; all that is above, you may freely pos-
 " sess, but farther I cannot, must not, comply.
 " The vow is passed; I wish it were undone,
 " but now it is impossible." You may con-
 ceive, my companions, the embarrassment our
 young lovers felt upon this occasion. They
 kneeled to St. Catherine, and though both de-
 paired, both implored her assistance. Their tute-
 lar saint was entreated to shew some expedient, by
 which both might continue to love, and yet both
 be happy. Their petition was sincere. St. Ca-
 therine was touched with compassion; for lo, a
 miracle! Lucretia's girdle unloosed, as if with-
 out hands; and though before bound round her
 middle, fell spontaneously down to her feet, and
 gave Orlandino the possession of all those beauties
 which lay above it."



The B E E.

NUMBER VII.

SATURDAY, *November 17, 1759.*

Of ELOQUENCE.



OF all kinds of success, that of an orator is the most pleasing. Upon other occasions, the applause we deserve is conferred in our absence, and we are insensible of the pleasure we have given; but in eloquence, the victory and the triumph are inseparable. We read our own glory in the face of every spectator, the audience is moved, the antagonist is defeated, and the whole circle bursts into unsolicited applause.

O

The

The rewards which attend excellence in this way are so pleasing, that numbers have written professed treatises to teach us the art; schools have been established with no other intent; rhetoric has taken place among the institutions, and pedants have ranged under proper heads, and distinguished with long learned names, *some* of the strokes of nature, or of passion, which orators have used. I say only *some* for a folio volume could not contain all the figures which have been used by the truly eloquent, and scarce a good speaker or writer, but makes use of some that are peculiar or new.

Eloquence has preceded the rules of rhetoric, as languages have been formed before grammar. Nature renders men eloquent in great interests, or great passions. He that is sensibly touched, sees things with a very different eye from the rest of mankind. All nature to him becomes an object of comparison and metaphor, without attending to it; he throws life into all, and inspires his audience with a part of his own enthusiasm.

It has been remarked, that the lower parts of mankind generally express themselves most figuratively, and that tropes are found in the most ordinary forms of conversation. Thus, in every language, the heart burns; the courage is roused; the

the eyes sparkle ; the spirits are cast down ; passion enflames ; pride swells, and pity sinks the soul. Nature, every where, speaks in those strong images, which, from their frequency, pass unnoticed.

Nature it is which inspires those rapturous enthusiasms, those irresistible turns ; a strong passion, a pressing danger, calls up all the imagination, and gives the orator irresistible force. Thus, a captain of the first caliphs, seeing his soldiers fly, cried out, “ Whither do you run ? the enemy “ are not there ! You have been told that the “ caliph is dead ; but God is still living. He “ regards the brave, and will reward the courageous. Advance ! ”

A man, therefore, may be called eloquent, who transfers the passion or sentiment with which he is moved himself, into the breast of another ; and this definition appears the more just, as it comprehends the graces of silence, and of action. An intimate persuasion of the truth to be proved, is the sentiment and passion to be transferred ; and he who effects this, is truly possessed of the talent of eloquence.

I have called eloquence a talent, and not an art, as so many rhetoricians have done, as art is acquired by exercise and study, and eloquence is

the gift of nature. Rules will never make either a work or a discourse eloquent; they only serve to prevent faults, but not to introduce beauties; to prevent those passages which are truly eloquent, and dictated by nature from being blended with others, which might disgust, or, at least, abate our passion.

What we clearly conceive, (says Boileau) we can clearly express. I may add, that what is felt with emotion, is expressed also with the same movements; the words arise as readily to paint our emotions, as to express our thoughts with perspicuity. The cool care an orator takes to express passions which he does not feel, only prevents his rising into that passion he would seem to feel. In a word, to feel your subject thoroughly, and to speak without fear, are the only rules of eloquence, properly so called, which I can offer. Examine a writer of genius on the most beautiful parts of his work, and he will always assure you that such passages are generally those which have given him the least trouble, for they came as if by inspiration. To pretend that cold and didactic precepts will make a man eloquent, is only to prove that he is incapable of eloquence.

But, as in being perspicuous, it is necessary to have a full idea of the subject, so in being eloquent,

quent, it is not sufficient, if I may so express it, to feel by halves. The orator should be strongly impressed, which is generally the effects of a fine and exquisite sensibility, and not that transient and superficial emotion, which he excites in the greatest part of his audience. It is even impossible to affect the hearers in any great degree, without being affected ourselves. In vain it will be objected, that many writers have had the art to inspire their readers with a passion for virtue, without being virtuous themselves; since it may be answered, that sentiments of virtue filled their minds at the time they were writing. They felt the inspiration strongly, while they praised justice, generosity, or good nature; but, unhappily for them, these passions might have been discontinued, when they laid down the pen. In vain will it be objected again, that we can move without being moved, as we can convince, without being convinced. It is much easier to deceive our reason than ourselves; a trifling defect in reasoning, may be overseen, and lead a man astray; for it requires reason and time to detect the falshood, but our passions are not so easily imposed upon, our eyes, our ears, and every sense, is watchful to detect the imposture.

No discourse can be eloquent, that does not elevate the mind. Pathetic eloquence, it is true, has for its only object to affect; but I appeal to

men of sensibility, whether their pathetic feelings are not accompanied with some degree of elevation. We may then call eloquence and sublimity the same thing, since it is impossible to be one, without feeling the other. From hence it follows, that we may be eloquent in any language, since no language refuses to paint those sentiments with which we are thoroughly impressed. What is usually called sublimity of style, seems to be only an error. Eloquence is not in the words, but in the subject, and in great concerns, the more simply any thing is expressed, it is generally the more sublime. True eloquence does not consist, as the rhetoricians assure us, in saying great things in a sublime style, but in a simple style; for there is, properly speaking, no such thing as a sublime style, the sublimity lies only in the things; and when they are not so, the language may be turgid, affected, metaphorical, but not affecting.

What can be more simply expressed, than the following extract from a celebrated preacher, and yet what was ever more sublime? Speaking of the small number of the elect, he breaks out thus among his audience: " Let me suppose that
" this was the last hour of us all; that the heavens
" were opening over our heads; that time was
" passed, and eternity begun; that Jesus Christ in
" all his glory, that man of sorrows in all his
" glory, appeared on the tribunal, and that we
" were

“ were assembled here to receive our final decree
“ of life or death eternal ! Let me ask, im-
“ pressed with terror like you, and not separating
“ my lot from yours, but putting myself in the
“ same situation in which we must all one day
“ appear before God, our judge. Let me ask,
“ if Jesus Christ should now appear to make the
“ terrible separation of the just from the unjust,
“ do you think the greatest number would be
“ saved ? Do you think the number of the elect
“ would even be equal to that of the sinners ?
“ Do you think, if all our works were examined
“ with justice, would he find ten just persons in
“ this great assembly ? Monsters of ingratitude
“ would he find one ? ” Such passages as these,
are sublime in every language. The expression
may be less striking, or more indistinct, but the
greatness of the idea still remains. In a word,
we may be eloquent in every language and in every
style, since elocution is only an assistant, but not
a constitutor of eloquence.

Of what use, then, will it be said, are all
the precepts given us upon this head, both by the
antients and moderns ? I answer, that they cannot
make us eloquent, but they will certainly prevent
us from becoming ridiculous. They can seldom
procure a single beauty, but they may banish a
thousand faults. The true method of an orator,
is not to attempt always to move, always to affect,

to be continually sublime, but at proper intervals to give rest both to his own and the passions of his audience. In these periods of relaxation, or of preparation rather, rules may teach him to avoid any thing low, trivial, or disgusting. Thus criticism, properly speaking, is intended not to assist those parts which are sublime, but those which are naturally mean and humble, which are composed with coolness and caution, and where the orator rather endeavours not to offend, than attempts to please.

I have hitherto insisted more strenuously on that eloquence which speaks to the passions, as it is a species of oratory almost unknown in England. At the bar it is quite discontinued, and I think with justice. In the senate, it is used but sparingly, as the orator speaks to enlightened judges. But in the pulpit, in which the orator should chiefly address the vulgar, it seems strange, that it should be entirely laid aside.

The vulgar of England are without exception, the most barbarous and the most unknowing of any in Europe. A great part of their ignorance may be chiefly ascribed to their teachers, who, with the most pretty gentleman-like serenity, deliver their cool discourses, and address the reason of men, who have never reasoned in all their lives. They are told of cause and effect, of beings self
existent,

existent, and the universal scale of beings. They are informed of the excellence of the Bangorian controversy, and the absurdity of an intermediate state. The spruce preacher reads his lucubration without lifting his nose from the text, and never ventures to earn the shame of an enthusiast.

By this means, though his audience feel not one word of all he says, he earns, however, among his acquaintance, the character of a man of sense; among his acquaintance only did I say, nay, even with his bishop.

The polite of every country have several motives to induce them to a rectitude of action; the love of virtue for its own sake, the shame of offending, and the desire of pleasing. The vulgar have but one, the enforcements of religion; and yet those who should push this motive home to their hearts, are basely found to desert their post. They speak to the squire, the philosopher, and the pedant; but the poor, those who really want instruction, are left uninstructed.

I have attended most of our pulpit orators, who, it must be owned, write extremely well upon the text they assume. To give them their due also, they read their sermons with elegance and propriety, but this goes but a very short way in true eloquence. The speaker must be moved.

In

In this, in this alone, our English divines are deficient. Were they to speak to a few calm dispassionate hearers, they certainly use the properest methods of address; but their audience is chiefly composed of the poor, who must be influenced by motives of reward and punishment, and whose only virtues lie in self-interest or fear.

How then are such to be addressed; not by studied periods, or cold disquisitions; not by the labours of the head, but the honest spontaneous dictates of the heart. Neither writing a sermon with regular periods and all the harmony of elegant expression; neither reading it with emphasis, propriety, and deliberation; neither pleasing with metaphor, simile, or rhetorical sustian; neither arguing coolly, and untying consequences united in *a priori*, nor bundling up inductions *a posteriori*; neither pedantic jargon, nor academical trifling, can persuade the poor; writing a discourse coolly in the closet, then getting it by memory, and delivering it on Sundays, even that will not do. What then is to be done? I know of no expedient to speak; to speak at once intelligibly, and feelingly, except to understand the language. To be convinced of the truth of the object; to be perfectly acquainted with the subject in view, to prepossess yourself with a low opinion of your audience, and to do the rest extempore. By this means strong expressions, new thoughts, rising passions,

passions, and the true declamatory style, will naturally ensue.

Fine declamation does not consist in flowery periods, delicate allusions, or musical cadences; but in a plain, open, loose stile, where the periods are long and obvious; where the same thought is often exhibited in several points of view; all this, strong sense, a good memory, and a small share of experience, will furnish to every orator; and without these a clergyman may be called a fine preacher, a judicious preacher, and a man of sound sense; he may make his hearers admire his understanding, but will seldom enlighten theirs. ¹

When I think of the Methodist preachers among us, how seldom they are endued with common sense, and yet how often and how justly they affect their hearers, I cannot avoid saying within myself, had these been bred gentlemen, and been endued with even the meanest share of understanding, what might they not effect! Did our bishops, who can add dignity to their expostulations, testify the same fervour, and *entreat* their hearers, as well as *argue*, what might not be the consequence! The vulgar, by which I mean the bulk of mankind, would then have a double motive to love religion, first from seeing its professors honoured here, and next from the consequences here-
after

after. At present, the enthusiasms of the poor are opposed to law; did law conspire with their enthusiasms, we should not only be the happiest nation upon earth, but the wisest also.

Enthusiasm in religion, which prevails only among the vulgar, should be the chief object of politics. A society of enthusiasts, governed by reason among the great, is the most indissoluble, the most virtuous, and the most efficient of its own decrees that can be imagined. Every country that has any degree of strength, have had their enthusiasms, which ever serve as laws among the people. The Greeks had their *Kalokagathia*, the Romans their *Amor Patriæ*, and we the truer and firmer bond of the *Protestant religion*. The principle is the same in all; how much then is it the duty of those whom the law has appointed teachers of this religion to enforce its obligations, and to raise those enthusiasms among people, by which alone political society can subsist.

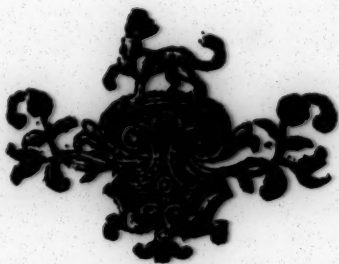
From eloquence, therefore, the morals of our people are to expect emendation; but how little can they be improved, by men who get into the pulpit rather to shew their parts, than convince us of the truth of what they deliver, who are painfully correct in their stile, musical in their tones, where every sentiment, every expression, seems the result of meditation and deep study.

Tillotson

Tillotson has been commended as the model of pulpit eloquence ; thus far he should be imitated, where he generally strives to convince, rather than to please : but to adopt his long, dry, and sometimes tedious discussions, which serve to amuse only divines, and are utterly neglected by the generality of mankind, to praise the intricacy of his periods, which are too long to be spoken, to continue his cool phlegmatic manner of enforcing every truth, is certainly erroneous. As I said before, the good preacher should adopt no model, write no sermons, study no periods ; let him but understand his subject, the language he speaks, and be convinced of the truths he delivers. It is amazing to what heights eloquence of this kind may reach ! This is that eloquence the ancients represented as lightning, bearing down every opposer ; this the power which has turned whole assemblies into astonishment, admiration, and awe, that is described by the torrent, the flame, and every other instance of irresistible impetuosity.

But to attempt such noble heights, belongs only to the truly great, or the truly good. To discard the lazy manner of reading sermons, or speaking sermons by rote ; to set up singly against the opposition of men who are attached to their own errors, and to endeavour to be great, instead of being prudent, are qualities we seldom
see

see united. A minister of the church of England, who may be possessed of good sense, and some hopes of preferment, will seldom give up such substantial advantages for the empty pleasure of improving society. By his present method he is liked by his friends, admired by his dependants, not displeasing to his bishop; he lives as well, eats and sleeps as well, as if a real orator, and an eager asserter of his mission; he will hardly, therefore, venture all this to be called, perhaps, an enthusiast; nor will he depart from customs established by the brotherhood, when, by such a conduct, he only singles himself out for their contempt.



CUSTOM and LAWS compared.

WHAT, say some, can give us a more contemptible idea of a large state than to find it mostly governed by custom ; to have few written laws, and no boundaries to mark the jurisdiction between the senate and people ? Among the number who speak in this manner is the great Montesquieu, who asserts that every nation is free in proportion to the number of its written laws, and seems to hint at a despotic and arbitrary conduct in the present king of Prussia, who has abridged the laws of his country into a very short compass.

As Tacitus and Montesquieu happen to differ in sentiment upon a subject of so much importance (for the Roman expressly asserts, that the state is generally vicious in proportion to the number of its laws) it will not be amiss to examine it a little more minutely, and see whether a state, which, like England, is burdened with a multiplicity of written laws, or which, like Switzerland, Geneva, and some other republics, is governed by custom, and the determination of the judge is best.

And to prove the superiority of custom to written law, we shall at least find history conspiring.

spiring. Custom, or the traditional observance of the practice of their forefathers, was what directed the Romans, as well in their public as private determinations. Custom was appealed to in pronouncing sentence against a criminal, where part of the formulary was *more majorum*. So Salsust, speaking of the expulsion of Tarquin, says, *mutato more*, and not *lege mutata*; and Virgil, *pacisque imponere morem*. So that, in those times of the empire in which the people retained their liberty, they were governed by custom; when they sunk under oppression and tyranny, they were restrained by new laws, and the laws of tradition abolished.

As getting the ancients on our side is half a victory, it will not be amiss to fortify the argument with an observation of Chrysostom's: *That the enslaved are the fittest to be governed by laws, and free men by custom*. Custom partakes of the nature of parental injunction; it is kept by the people themselves, and observed with a willing obedience. The observance of it must, therefore, be a mark of freedom, and coming originally to a state from the revered founders of its liberty, will be an encouragement and assistance to it in the defence of that blessing; but a conquered people, a nation of slaves, must pretend to none of this freedom, or these happy distinctions, having, by degeneracy, lost all right to their

their brave forefathers free institutions, their masters will in policy take the forfeiture; and the fixing a conquest must be done by giving laws which may every moment serve to remind the people enslaved of their conquerors, nothing being more dangerous than to trust a late-subdued people with old customs, that presently upbraid their degeneracy, and provoke them to revolt.

The wisdom of the Roman republic, in their veneration for custom, and backwardness to introduce a new law, was perhaps the cause of their long continuance, and of the virtues of which they have set the world so many examples. But to shew in what that wisdom consists, it may be proper to observe, that the benefit of new written laws are merely confined to the consequences of their observance; but customary laws, keeping up a veneration for the founders, engage men in the imitation of their virtues, as well as policy. To this may be ascribed the religious regard the Romans paid to their forefathers memory, and their adhering for so many ages to the practice of the same virtues, which nothing contributed more to efface than the introduction of a voluminous body of new laws over the neck of venerable custom.

The simplicity, conciseness, and antiquity of custom gives an air of majesty and immutability
P that

210 CUSTOM and LAWS compared.

that inspires awe and veneration ; but new laws are too apt to be voluminous, perplexed, and indeterminate ; from whence must necessarily arise neglect, contempt, and ignorance.

As every human institution is subject to gross imperfections, so laws must necessarily be liable to the same inconveniences, and their defects soon discovered. Thus, through the weakness of one part, all the rest are liable to be brought into contempt. But such weaknesses in a custom, for very obvious reasons, evade an examination ; besides, a friendly prejudice always stands up in their favour.

But let us suppose a new law to be perfectly equitable and necessary ; yet, if the procurers of it have betrayed a conduct that confesses bye-ends and private motives, the disgust to the circumstances disposes us, unreasonably indeed, to an irreverence of the law itself ; but we are indulgently blind to the most visible imperfections of an old custom. Though we perceive the defects ourselves, yet we remain persuaded that our wise forefathers had good reasons for what they did ; and though such motives no longer continue, the benefit will still go along with the observance, though we don't know how. It is thus the Roman lawyers speak, *Non omnium quæ a majoribus constituta sunt ratio reddi potest, et ideo rationes*
eorum

eorum quæ constituuntur inquiri non oportet, alia quin multa ex his quæ certa sunt subvertuntur.

Those laws which preserve to themselves the greatest love and observance, must needs be best; but custom, as it executes itself, must be necessarily superior to written laws in this respect, which are to be executed by another. Thus nothing can be more certain than that numerous written laws are a sign of a degenerate community, and are frequently not the consequence of vicious morals in a state, but the causes.

From hence we see how much greater benefit it would be to the state rather to abridge than encrease its laws. We every day find them encreasing; acts and reports, which may be termed the acts of judges, are every day becoming more voluminous, and loading the subject with new penalties.

Laws ever encrease in number and severity, until they at length are strained so tight as to break themselves. Such was the case of the latter empire, whose laws were at length become so strict, that the barbarous invaders did not bring servitude but liberty.

OF THE
P R I D E and L U X U R Y
 OF THE
 Middling CLASS of P E O P L E.

OF all the follies and absurdities which this great metropolis labours under, there is not one, I believe, at present, appears in a more glaring and ridiculous light than the pride and luxury of the middling class of people; their eager desire of being seen in a sphere far above their capacities and circumstances, is daily, nay hourly instanced by the prodigious numbers of mechanics, who flock to the races, and gaming-tables, brothels, and all public diversions this fashionable town affords.

You shall see a grocer, or a tallow-chandler sneak from behind the counter, clap on a laced coat and a bag, fly to the E. O. table, throw away fifty pieces with some sharpening man of quality, while his industrious wife is selling a pennyworth of sugar, or a pound of candles, to support her fashionable spouse in his extravagances.

I was led into this reflection by an odd adventure, which happened to me the other day at Epsom

some races, where I went, not through any desire, I do assure you, of laying bets, or winning thousands; but at the earnest request of a friend who had long indulged the curiosity of seeing the sport, very natural for an Englishman. When we had arrived at the course, and had taken several turns to observe the different objects that made up this whimsical groupe, a figure suddenly darted by us, mounted and dressed in all the elegance of those polite gentry who come to shew you they have a little money, and rather than pay their just debts at home, generously come abroad to bestow it on gamblers and pickpockets. As I had not an opportunity of viewing his face till his return, I gently walked after him, and met him as he came back, when, to my no small surprise, I beheld, in this gay Narcissus, the visage of Jack Varnish, an humble vender of prints. Disgusted at the sight, I pulled my friend by the sleeve, pressed him to return home, telling him all the way, that I was so enraged at the fellow's impudence, I was resolved never to lay out another penny with him.

And now, pray sir, let me beg of you to give this a place in your paper, that Mr. Varnish may understand he mistakes the thing quite, if he imagines horse-racing commendable in a tradesman; and that he who is revelling every night in the arms of a common strumpet (though

bleſſed with an indulgent wife) when he ought to be minding his buſineſs, will never thrive in this world. He will find himſelf ſoon miſtaken, his finances decreate, his friends ſhun him, customers fall off, and himſelf thrown into a Gaol. I would earneſtly recommend this adage to every mechanic in London, "Keep your ſhop, and your ſhop " will keep you." A ſtrict obſervance of theſe words will, I am ſure, in time, gain them eſtates. Induſtry is the road to wealth, and honeſty to happineſs; and he who ſtrenuouſly endeavours to purſue them both, may never fear the critic's laſh, or the ſharp cries of penury and want.



SABINUS and OLINDA.

IN a fair, rich and flourishing country, whose cliffs are washed by the German ocean, lived Sabinus, a youth formed by nature to make a conquest wherever he thought proper; but the constancy of his disposition fixed him only with Olinda. He was, indeed, superior to her in fortune, but that defect on her side was so amply supplied by her merit, that none was thought more worthy of his regards than she. He loved her, he was beloved by her; and, in a short time, by joining hands publickly, they avowed the union of their hearts. But, alas! none, however fortunate, however happy, are exempt from the shafts of envy, and the malignant effects of ungoverned appetite. How unsafe, how detestable, are they, who have this fury for their guide. How certainly will it lead them from themselves, and plunge them in errors they would have shuddered at, even in apprehension. Ariana, a lady of many amiable qualities, very nearly allied to Sabinus, and highly esteemed by him, imagined herself slighted, and injuriously treated, since his marriage with Olinda. By uncautiously suffering this jealousy to corrode in her breast, she began to give a loose to passion; she forgot those many virtues, for which she had been so long, and so justly ap-

P 4

plauded.

plauded. Causeless suspicion, and mistaken resentment, betrayed her, into all the gloom of discontent; she sighed without ceasing; the happiness of others gave her intolerable pain; she thought of nothing but revenge. How unlike what she was, the chearful, the prudent, the compassionate Ariana!

She continually laboured to disturb an union so firmly, so affectionately founded, and planned every scheme which she thought most likely to disturb it.

Fortune seemed willing to promote her unjust intentions; the circumstances of Sabinus had been long embarrassed by a tedious law-suit, and the court determining the cause unexpectedly in favour of his opponent, it sunk his fortune to the lowest pitch of penury from the highest affluence. From the nearness of relationship, Sabinus expected from Ariana those assistances his present situation required; but she was insensible to all his entreaties, and the justice of every remonstrance, unless he first separated from Olinda, whom she regarded with detestation. Upon a compliance with her desires in this respect, she promised her fortune, her interest, and her all, should be at his command. Sabinus was shocked at the proposal; he loved his wife with inexpressible tenderness, and refused those offers with indignation which
were

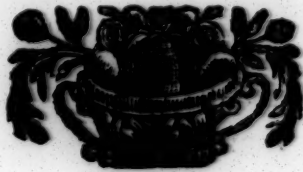
were to be purchased at so high a price, Ariana was no less displeased to find her offers rejected, and gave a loose to all that warmth which she had long endeavoured to suppress. Reproach generally produces recrimination; the quarrel rose to such a height, that Sabinus was marked for destruction; and the very next day, upon the strength of an old family debt, he was sent to gaol, with none but Olinda to comfort him in his miseries. In this mansion of distress they lived together with resignation and even with comfort. She provided the frugal meal, and he read for her while employed in the little offices of domestic concern. Their fellow prisoners admired their contentment, and whenever they had a desire of relaxing into mirth, and enjoying those little comforts that a prison affords, Sabinus and Olinda were sure to be of the party. Instead of reproaching each other for their mutual wretchedness, they both lightened it, by bearing each a share of the load imposed by providence. Whenever Sabinus shewed the least concern on his dear partner's account, she conjured him by the love he bore her, by those tender ties which now united them for ever, not to discompose himself. That, so long as his affection lasted, she defied all the ills of fortune, and every loss of fame or friendship. That nothing could make her miserable, but his seeming to want happiness; nothing pleased, but his sympathising with her pleasure. A continu-
ance

ance in prison soon robbed them of the little they had left, and famine began to make its horrid appearance ; yet still was neither found to murmur ; they both looked upon their little boy, who, insensible of their or his own distress, was playing about the room, with inexpressible yet silent anguish, when a messenger came to inform them that Ariana was dead, and that her will, in favour of a very distant relation, and who was now in another country, might be easily procured, and burnt, in which case, all her large fortune would revert to him, as being the next heir at law.

A proposal of so base a nature filled our unhappy couple with horror ; they ordered the messenger immediately out of the room, and falling upon each other's neck, indulged an agony of sorrow ; for now even all hopes of relief were banished. The messenger who made the proposal, however, was only a spy sent by Ariana to sound the dispositions of a man she loved at once and persecuted. This lady, though warped by wrong passions, was naturally kind, judicious, and friendly. She found that all her attempts to shake the constancy or the integrity of Sabinus were ineffectual ; she had, therefore, begun to reflect, and to wonder, how she could, so long, and so unprovoked, injure such uncommon fortitude and affection.

She

She had, from the next room, herself heard the reception given to the messenger, and could not avoid feeling all the force of superior virtue; she, therefore, reassumed her former goodness of heart; she came into the room with tears in her eyes, and acknowledged the severity of her former treatment. She bestowed her first care in providing them all the necessary supplies, and acknowledged them as the most deserving heirs of her fortune. From this moment Sabinus enjoyed an uninterrupted happiness with Olinda, and both were happy in the friendship and assistance of Ariana, who dying soon after, left them in possession of a large estate, and, in her last moments, confessed that virtue was the only path to true glory; and that, however innocence may for a time be depressed, a steady perseverance will, in time, lead it to a certain victory.



THE
SENTIMENTS
OF A
FRENCHMAN
ON THE
TEMPER of the ENGLISH.

NOTHING is so uncommon among the English, as that easy affability, that instant method of acquaintance, or that chearfulness of disposition, which make in France the charm of every society. Yet, in this gloomy reserve, they seem to pride themselves, and think themselves less happy, if obliged to be more social. One may assert, without wronging them, that they do not study the method of going through life with pleasure and tranquility, like the French. Might not this be a proof that they are not so much philosophers as they imagine? Philosophy is no more than the art of making ourselves happy; that is, of seeking pleasure in regularity, and reconciling what we owe to society with what is due to ourselves.

This

This chearfulness, which is the characteristic of our nation in the eye of an Englishman, passes almost for folly. But is their gloominess a greater mark of their wisdom? and folly against folly is not the most chearful sort the best. If our gaiety makes them sad, they ought not to find it strange, if their seriousness makes us laugh.

As this disposition to levity is not familiar to them, and as they look on every thing as a fault which they do not find at home, the English, who live among us, are hurt by it. Several of their authors reproach us with it as a vice, or at least as a ridicule.

Mr. Addison styles us a comic nation. In my opinion it is not acting the philosopher on this point, to regard as a fault, that quality which contributes most to the pleasure of society and happiness of life. Plato, convinced that whatever makes men happier, makes them better, advises to neglect nothing that may excite and convert to an early habit, this sense of joy in children. Seneca places it in the first rank of good things. Certain it is, at least, that gaiety may be a concomitant of all sorts of virtue, but that there are some vices with which it is incompatible.

222 The SENTIMENTS of a Frenchman

As to him who laughs at every thing, and him who laughs at nothing, neither of them has found judgment. All the difference I find between them is, that the last is constantly the most unhappy. Those who speak against cheerfulness, prove nothing else, but that they were born melancholic, and that in their hearts they rather envy than condemn that levity they affect to despise.

The Spectator, whose constant object was the good of mankind in general, and of his own nation in particular, should, according to his own principles, place cheerfulness among the most desirable qualities; and, probably, whenever he contradicts himself in this particular, it is only to conform to the tempers of the people whom he addresses. He asserts, that gaiety is one great obstacle to the prudent conduct of women. But are those of a melancholic temper, as the English women generally are, less subject to the foibles of love? I am acquainted with some doctors in this science, to whose judgment I would more willingly refer, than to his. And, perhaps, in reality, persons naturally of a gay temper, are too easily taken off by different objects, to give themselves up to all the excesses of this passion.

Mr.

On the TEMPER of the ENGLISH. 223

Mr. Hobbes, a celebrated philosopher of his nation, maintains, that laughing proceeds from our pride alone. This is only a paradox if asserted of laughing in general, and only argues that misanthropical disposition for which he was remarkable.

To bring the causes he assigns, for laughing, under suspicion, it is sufficient to remark, that proud people are commonly those who laugh least. Gravity is the inseparable companion of pride. To say that a man is vain, because the humour of a writer, or the buffooneries of an harlequin, excite his laughter, would be advancing a great absurdity. We should distinguish between laughter, inspired by joy, and that which arises from mockery. The malicious sneer is improperly called laughter. It must be owned, that pride is the parent of such laughter as this; but this is in itself vicious; whereas, the other sort has nothing in its principles or effects that deserves condemnation. We find this amiable in others, and is it unhappiness to feel a disposition towards it in ourselves?

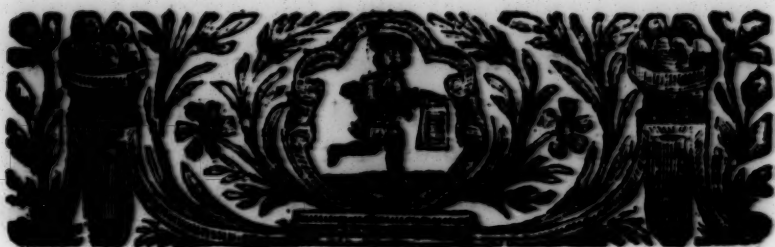
When I see an Englishman laugh, I fancy I rather see him hunting after joy, than having caught it; and this is more particularly remarkable in their women, whose tempers are inclined to melancholy. A laugh leaves no more traces
on

224 The SENTIMENTS of a Frenchman, &c.

on their countenance than a flash of lightning on the face of the heavens. The most laughing air is instantly succeeded by the most gloomy. One would be apt to think that their souls open with difficulty to joy, or at least that joy is not pleased with its habitation there.

In regard to fine raillery, it must be allowed, that it is not natural to the English, and therefore those who endeavour at it make but an ill figure. Some of their authors have candidly confessed, that pleasantry is quite foreign to their character; but, according to the reason they give, they lose nothing by this confession. Bishop Sprat gives the following one: “The English (says he) have too much bravery to submit to be derided, and too much virtue and honour to mock others



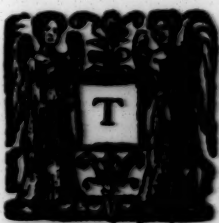


The B E E.

NUMBER VIII.

SATURDAY, *November 24*, 1759.

On DECEIT and FALSHOOD.



THE following account is so judiciously conceived, that I am convinced the reader will be more pleased with it, than with any thing of mine, so I shall make no apology for this new publication.

To the A U T H O R, &c.

S I R,

DECEIT and falshood have ever been an over-match for truth, and followed and admired by the majority of mankind. If we enquire after the reason of this, we shall find it

Q

in

in our own imaginations, which are amused and entertained with the perpetual novelty and variety that fiction affords, but find no manner of delight in the uniform simplicity of homely truth, which still sues them under the same appearance.

He, therefore, that would gain our hearts, must make his court to our fancy, which being sovereign comptroller of the passions, lets them loose, and enflames them more or less, in proportion to the force and efficacy of the first cause, which is ever the more powerful the more new it is. Thus, in mathematical demonstrations themselves, though they seem to aim at pure truth and instruction, and to be addressed to our reason alone, yet I think it is pretty plain, that our understanding is only made a drudge to gratify our invention and curiosity, and we are pleased not so much because our discoveries are certain, as because they are new.

I do not deny but the world is still pleased with things that pleased it many ages ago, but it should at the same time be considered, that man is naturally so much of a logician, as to distinguish between matters that are plain and easy, and others that are hard and inconceivable. What we understand, we overlook and despise, and what we know nothing of, we hug and delight in. Thus there are such things as perpetual novelties ;

velities; for we are pleased no longer than we are amazed, and nothing so much contents us as that which confounds us.

This weakness in human nature, gave occasion to a party of men to make such gainful markets as they have done of our credulity. All objects and facts whatever, now ceased to be what they had been for ever before, and received what make and meaning it was found convenient to put upon them: What people eat, and drank, and saw, was not what they eat, and drank, and saw, but something farther, which they were fond of, because they were ignorant of it. In short, nothing was itself, but something beyond itself; and by these artifices and amusements, the heads of the world were so turned and intoxicated, that, at last, there was scarce a sound set of brains left in it.

In this state of giddiness and infatuation it was no very hard task to persuade the already deluded, that there was an actual society and communion between human creatures and spiritual dæmons. And when they had thus put people into the power and clutches of the devil, none but *they alone* could have either skill or strength to bring the prisoners back again.

But so far did they carry this dreadful drollery, and so fond were they of it, that to maintain it and themselves in profitable repute, they literally sacrificed for it, and made impious victims of numberless old women, and other miserable persons, who either through ignorance could not say what they were bid to say, or, through madness, said what they should not have said. Fear and stupidity made them incapable of defending themselves, and frenzy and infatuation made them confess *guilty impossibilities*, which produced cruel sentences, and then inhuman executions.

Some of these wretched mortals finding themselves either hateful or terrible to all, and befriended by none, and, perhaps, wanting the common necessities of life, came at last, to abhor themselves as much as they were abhorred by others, and grew willing to be burnt or hanged out of a world, which was no other to them than a scene of persecution and anguish.

Others, of strong imaginations and little understandings, were by positive and repeated charges against them, of committing mischievous and supernatural facts and villainies, *deluded* to judge of themselves by the judgment of their enemies, whose weakness or malice prompted them to be accusers. And many have been condemned as witches and dealers with the devil, for no other reason

reason but their knowing more than those who accused, tried, and passed sentence upon them.

In these cases, credulity is a much greater error than infidelity, and it is safer to believe nothing than too much. A man that believes little or nothing of witchcraft, will destroy nobody for being under the imputation of it; and so far he certainly acts with humanity to others, and safety to himself: But he that credits all, or too much, upon that article, is obliged, if he acts consistently with his persuasion, to kill all those whom he takes to be the killers of mankind; and such are witches. It would be a jest and a contradiction to say, that he is for sparing them who are harmless of that tribe, since the received notion of their supposed contract with the devil, implies that they are engaged by covenant and inclination to do all the mischief they possibly can.

I have heard many stories of witches, and read many accusations against them, but I do not remember any that would have induced me to have consigned over to the halter or the flame, any of those deplorable wretches, who, as they share our likeness and nature, ought to share our compassion, as persons cruelly accused of impossibilities.

But we love to delude ourselves, and often fancy or forge an effect, and then set ourselves as

gravely, as ridiculously, to find out the cause. Thus, for example, when a dream or the hyp has given us false terrors, or imaginary pains, we immediately conclude, that the infernal tyrant owes us a spite, and inflicts his wrath and stripes upon us, by the hands of some of his sworn servants amongst us. For this end an old woman is promoted to a seat in *Satan's* privy council, and appointed his executioner in chief, within her district. So ready and civil are we to allow the devil the dominion over us, and even to provide him with butchers and hangmen of our own make and nature.

I have often wondered why we did not, in chusing our proper officers for *Belzebub*, lay the lot rather upon men than women, the former being more bold and robust, and more equal to that bloody service; but, upon enquiry, I find it has been so ordered for two reasons; first, the men having the whole direction of this affair, are wise enough to slip their own necks out of the collar; and, secondly, an old woman is grown by custom the most avoided and most unpitied creature under the sun, the very name carrying contempt and satire in it. And so far, indeed, we pay but an uncourtly sort of respect to *Satan* in sacrificing to him nothing but the dry sticks of human nature.

We

We have a *wondering quality* within us, which finds huge gratification when we see strange feats done, and cannot at the same time see the doer, or the cause. Such actions are sure to be attributed to some witch or dæmon; for if we come to find they are silyly performed by artists of our own species, and by causes purely natural, our delight dies with our amazement.

It is therefore one of the most unthankful offices in the world, to go about to expose the mistaken notions of witchcraft and spirits; it is robbing mankind of a valuable imagination, and of the privilege of being deceived. Those who at any time undertook the task, have always met with rough treatment and ill language for their pains, and seldom escaped the imputation of atheism, because they would not allow the devil to be too powerful for the Almighty. For my part, I am so much a heretick as to believe, that God Almighty, and not the devil, governs the world.

If we enquire what are the common marks and symptoms by which witches are discovered to be such, we shall see how reasonably and mercifully those poor creatures were burnt and hanged, who unhappily fell under that name.

In the first place, the old woman must be prodigious ugly; her eyes hollow and red, her face shrivelled; she goes double, and her voice trembles. It frequently happens, that this rueful figure frightens a child into the palpitation of the heart: Home he runs, and tells his mamma, that goody such a one looked at him, and he is very ill. The good woman cries out, her dear baby is bewitched, and sends for the parson and the constable.

It is moreover necessary, that she be very poor. It is true, her master *Satan* has mines and hidden treasures in his gift; but no matter, she is for all that very poor, and lives on alms. She goes to *Sissy* the cook maid for a dish of broth, or the heel of a loaf, and *Sissy* denies them to her. The old woman goes away muttering, and, perhaps, in less than a month's time *Sissy* hears the voice of a cat, and strains her ankles, which are certain signs that she is bewitched.

A farmer sees his cattle die of the murrain, and the sheep of the rot, and poor goody is forced to be the cause of their death, because she was seen talking to herself the evening before such an ewe departed, and had been gathering sticks at the side of the wood where such a cow run mad.

The old woman has always for her companion an old grey cat, which is a disguised devil too, and confederate with goody in works of darkness. They frequently go journies into *Egypt* upon a broom-staff, in half an hour's time, and now and then goody and her cat change shapes. The neighbours often over-hear them in deep and solemn discourse together, plotting some dreadful mischief, you may be sure.

There is a famous way of trying witches, recommended by king *James I.* The old woman is tied hand and foot, and thrown into the river, and if she swims she is guilty, and taken out and burnt; but if she is innocent, she sinks, and is *only* drowned.

The witches are said to meet their master frequently in churches and church-yards. I wonder at the boldness of *Satan* and his congregation, in revelling and playing mountebank farces on consecrated ground; and I have as often wondered at the oversight and ill policy of some people in allowing it possible.

It would have been both dangerous and impious to have treated this subject at one certain time in this ludicrous manner. It used to be managed with all possible gravity, and even terror; and, indeed, it was made a tragedy in all its parts,
and

234 On DECEIT and FALSHOOD.

and thousands were sacrificed, or rather murdered, by such evidence and colours, as, God be thanked, we are at this day ashamed of. An old woman may be *miserable now*, and not be *hanged* for it.



A N

A C C O U N T

O F T H E

AUGUSTAN AGE of England.

THE history of the rise of language and learning is calculated to gratify curiosity, rather than to satisfy the understanding. An account of that period only, when language and learning arrived at its highest perfection, is the most conducive to real improvement, since it at once raises emulation, and directs to the proper objects. The age of Leo X. in Italy, is confessed to be the Augustan age with them. The French writers seem agreed to give the same appellation to that of Lewis XIV. but the English are yet undetermined with respect to themselves.

Some have looked upon the writers in the times of Queen Elizabeth as the true standard for future imitation; others have descended to the reign of James I. and others still lower, to that of Charles II. Were I to be permitted to offer an opinion upon this subject, I should readily
give

give my vote for the reign of Queen Anne, or some years before that period. It was then that taste was united to genius, and, as before, our writers charmed with their strength of thinking, so then they pleased with strength and grace united. In that period of British glory, though no writer attracts our attention singly, yet, like stars lost in each others brightness, they have cast such a lustre upon the age in which they lived, that their minutest transactions will be attended to by posterity with a greater eagerness than the most important occurrences of even empires, which have been transacted in greater obscurity.

At that period there seemed to be a just balance between patronage and the press. Before it, men were little esteemed whose only merit was genius; and since, men who can prudently be content to catch the public, are certain of living without dependance. But the writers of the period of which I am speaking, were sufficiently esteemed by the great, and not rewarded enough by booksellers, to set them above independance. Fame consequently then was the truest road to happiness; a sedulous attention to the mechanical business of the day makes the present never-failing resource.

The age of Charles II. which our countrymen term the age of wit and immorality, produced
some

some writers that at once served to improve our language and corrupt our hearts. The King himself had a large share of knowledge, and some wit, and his courtiers were generally men who had been brought up in the school of affliction and experience. For this reason, when the sunshine of their fortune returned, they gave too great a loose to pleasure, and language was by them cultivated only as a mode of elegance. Hence, it became more enervated, and was dashed with quaintnesses which gave the public writings of those times a very illiberal air.

Lestrange, who was by no means so bad a writer as some have represented him, was sunk in party faction, and having generally the worst side of the argument, often had recourse to scolding, pertness, and, consequently, a vulgarity that discovers itself even in his more liberal compositions. He was the first writer who regularly enlisted himself under the banners of a party for pay, and fought for it through right and wrong for upwards of forty literary campaigns. This intrepidity gained him the esteem of Cromwell himself, and the papers he wrote even just before the revolution, almost with the rope about his neck, have his usual characters of impudence and perseverance. That he was a standard-writer cannot be disowned, because a great many very eminent authors formed their style by his. But his
standard

standard was far from being a just one ; though, when party considerations are set aside, he certainly was possessed of elegance, ease and perspicuity.

Dryden, though a great and undisputed genius, had the same cast as Leffrange. Even his plays discover him to be a party-man, and the same principle infects his stile in subjects of the lightest nature ; but the English tongue, as it stands at present, is greatly his debtor. He first gave it regular harmony, and discovered its latent powers. It was his pen that formed the Congreves, the Priors, and the Addisons, who succeeded him ; and had it not been for Dryden, we never should have known a Pope, at least in the meridian lustre he now displays. But Dryden's excellencies, as a writer, were not confined to poetry alone. There is in his prose writings an ease and elegance that have never yet been so well united in works of taste or criticism.

The English language owes very little to Otway, though, next to Shakespeare, the greatest genius England ever produced in tragedy. His excellencies lay in painting directly from nature, in catching every emotion just as it rises from the soul, and in all the powers of the moving and pathetic. He appears to have had no learning, no critical knowledge, and to have lived in great distress.

When

When he died, (which he did in an obscure house near the Minories) he had about him the copy of a tragedy, which it seems he had sold for a trifle to Bentley the bookseller. I have seen an advertisement at the end of one of Lestrange's political papers, offering a reward to any one who should bring it to his shop. What an invaluable treasure was there irretrievably lost, by the ignorance and neglect of the age he lived in.

Lee had a great command of language, and vast force of expression, both which the best of our succeeding dramatic poets thought proper to take for their models. Rowe, in particular, seems to have caught that manner, though, in all other respects, inferior. The other poets of that reign contributed but little towards improving the English tongue, and it is not certain whether they did not injure rather than improve it. Immorality has its cant as well as party, and many shocking expressions now crept into the language, and became the transient fashion of the day. The upper galleries, by the prevalence of party-spirit, were courted with great assiduity, and a horse-laugh following ribaldry, was the highest instance of applause, the chastity as well as energy of diction being overlooked, or neglected.

Virtuous sentiment was recovered, but energy of stile never was. This, though disregarded in
plays

plays and party-writings, still prevailed amongst men of character and business. The dispatches of Sir Richard Fanshawe, Sir William Godolphin, Lord Arlington, and many other ministers of state, are all of them, with respect to diction, manly, bold and nervous. Sir William Temple, though a man of no learning, had great knowledge and experience. He wrote always like a man of sense and a gentleman, and his style is the model by which the best prose writers in the reign of Queen Anne, formed theirs. The beauties of Mr. Locke's style, though not so much celebrated, are as striking as that of his understanding. He never says more nor less than he ought, and never makes use of a word that he could have changed for a better. The same observation holds good of Dr. Samuel Clarke.

Mr. Locke was a philosopher, his antagonist Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, was a man of learning, and therefore the contest between them was unequal. The clearness of Mr. Locke's head renders his language perspicuous, the learning of Stillingfleet's clouds his. This is an instance of the superiority of good sense over learning, towards the improvement of every language.

There is nothing peculiar to the language of Archbishop Tillotson, but his manner of writing is inimitable; for one who reads him, wonders why

why he himself did not think and speak in that very manner. The turn of his periods is agreeable, tho' artless, and every thing he says seems to flow spontaneously from inward conviction. Barrow, tho' greatly his superior in learning, falls short of him in other respects.

The time seems to be at hand, when justice will be done to Mr. Cowley's prose, as well as poetical writings; and tho' his friend Doctor Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, in his diction, falls far short of the abilities for which he has been celebrated; yet, there is sometimes an happy flow in his periods, something that looks like eloquence. The stile of his successor Atterbury, has been much commended by his friends, which always happens when a man distinguishes himself in party, but there is in it nothing extraordinary. Even the speech which he made for himself at the bar of the house of Lords, before he was sent into exile, is void of eloquence, tho' it has been cry'd up by his friends to such a degree, that his enemies have suffered it to pass uncensured.

The philosophical manner of Lord Shaftesbury's writing, is nearer to that of Cicero, than any English author has yet arrived at, but, perhaps, had Cicero wrote in English, his composition would have greatly exceeded that of our countryman. The diction of the latter is beautiful, but

R

such

such beauty, as upon nearer inspection, carries with it evident symptoms of affectation. This has been attended with very disagreeable consequences. Nothing is so easy to copy as affectation, and his Lordship's rank and fame have procured him more imitators in Britain than any other writer I know ; all faithfully preserving his blemishes, but, unhappily, not one of his beauties.

Mr. Trenchard and Dr. Davenant were political writers of great abilities in diction, and their pamphlets are now standards in that way of writing. They were followed by Dean Swift, who, tho' in other respects far their superior, never could arise to that manliness and clearness of diction in political writing, for which they were so justly famous.

They were all of them exceeded by the late Lord Bolingbroke, whose strength lay in that province ; for as a philosopher and a critic he was ill qualified, being destitute of virtue for the one, and of learning for the other. His writings against Sir Robert Walpole, are incomparably the best part of his works. The personal and perpetual antipathy he had for that family, to whose places he thought his own abilities had a right, gave a glow to his style, and an edge to his manner, that never has been yet equalled in political writing. His misfortunes and disappointments gave his mind a turn, which his friends mistook for philosophy, and

and at one time of his life he had the art to impose the same belief upon some of his enemies. His idea of a patriot King, which I reckon (as indeed it was) amongst his writings against Sir Robert Walpole, is a master-piece of diction. Even in his other works his style is excellent; but where a man either does not, or will not understand the subject he writes on, there must always be a deficiency. In politics, he was generally master of what he undertook, in morals never.

Mr. Addison, for a happy and natural style, will be always an honour to British literature. His diction indeed wants strength, but it is equal to all the subjects he undertakes to handle, as he never (at least in his finished works) attempts any thing either in the argumentative or demonstrative way.

Tho' Sir Richard Steele's reputation as a public writer, was owing to his connections with Mr. Addison, yet, after their intimacy was formed, Steele sunk in his merit as an author. This was not owing so much to the evident superiority on the part of Addison, as to the unnatural efforts which Steele made to equal or eclipse him. This emulation destroyed that genuine flow of diction which is discoverable in all his former compositions.

Whilst their writings engaged attention, and the favour of the public, reiterated but unsuccessful en-

deavours were made towards forming a grammar of the English language. The authors of those efforts went upon wrong principles. Instead of endeavouring to retrench the absurdities of our language, and bringing it to a certain criterion, their grammars were no other than a collection of rules attempting to naturalize those absurdities, and bring them under a regular system.

Somewhat effectual, however, might have been done towards fixing the standard of the English language, had it not been for the spirit of party. For both *whigs* and *tories* being ambitious to stand at the head of so great a design, the Queen's death happened before any plan of an academy could be resolved on.

Mean while, the necessity of such an institution became every day more apparent. The periodical and political writers which then swarmed, adopted the very worst manner of Lefrange, till not only all decency, but all propriety of language, was lost in the nation. Lesly, a pert writer, with some wit and learning, insulted the government every week with the grossest abuse. His stile and manner, both of which were illiberal, was imitated by Ridpath, De Foe, Dunton, and others of the opposite party, and Toland pleaded the cause of atheism and immorality in much the same strain; his subject seemed to debase his diction, and he

ever failed most in one, when he grew most licentious in the other.

Towards the end of Queen Anne's reign, some of the greatest men in England, devoted their time to party, and then a much better manner obtained in political writing. Mr. Walpole, Mr. Addison, Mr. Mainwaring, Mr. Steele, and many members of both houses of parliament, drew their pens for the whigs; but they seem to have been over-matched, tho' not in argument, yet in writing, by Bolingbroke, Prior, Swift, Arbuthnot, and the other friends of the opposite party. They who oppose a ministry, have always a better field for ridicule and reproof, than they who defend it.

Since that period, our writers have either been encouraged above their merits, or below them. Some, who were possessed of the meanest abilities, acquired the highest preferments, while others, who seemed born to reflect a lustre upon their age, perished by want and neglect. More, Savage, and Amherst, were possessed of great abilities, yet they were suffered to feel all the miseries that usually attend the ingenious and the imprudent, that attend men of strong passions, and no phlegmatic reserve in their command.

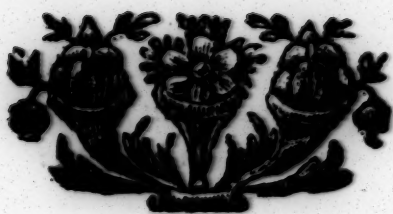
At present, were a man to attempt to improve his fortune, or encrease his friendship by poetry,

he would soon feel the anxiety of disappointment. The press lies open, and is a benefactor to every sort of literature, but that alone.

I am at a loss whether to ascribe this falling off of the public to a vicious taste in the poet, or in them. Perhaps, both are to be reprehended. The poet either drily didactic, gives us rules, which might appear abstruse even in a system of ethics, or triflingly volatile writes upon the most unworthy subjects. Content, if he can give music instead of sense; content, if he can paint to the imagination without any desires or endeavours to affect; the public, therefore, with justice discard such empty sound, which has nothing but jingle, or what is worse, the unmusical flow of blank verse, to recommend it. The late method also that our news papers have fallen into, of giving an epitome of every new publication, must greatly damp the writer's genius. He finds himself in this case at the mercy of men, who have neither abilities nor learning to distinguish his merit. He finds his own compositions mixed with the sordid trash of every daily scribbler. There is a sufficient specimen given of his work to abate curiosity, and yet so mutilated as to render him contemptible. His first, and, perhaps, his second work, by this means sink, among the crudities of the age, into oblivion. Fame, he finds, begin to turn her back; he therefore flies to profit which invites him, and he enrolls himself

himself in the lists of dulness and of avarice, for life.

Yet there are still among us men of the greatest abilities, and who, in some parts of learning, have surpassed their predecessors : Justice and friendship might here impel me to speak of names which will shine out to all posterity, but prudence restrains me from what I should otherwise eagerly embrace. Envy might rise against every honoured name I should mention, since scarce one of them has not those who are his enemies, or those who despise him, &c.



O F T H E

O P E R A in E N G L A N D.

THE rise and fall of our amusements pretty much resembles that of empire. They this day flourish without any visible cause for such vigour; the next they decay away, without any reason that can be assigned for their downfall. Some years ago the Italian opera was the only fashionable amusement among our nobility. The managers of the playhouses dreaded it as a mortal enemy, and our very poets lifted themselves in the opposition; at present, the house seems deserted, the castratizing to empty benches, even Prince Vologese himself, a youth of great expectations, sings himself out of breath, and rattles his chain to no purpose.

To say the truth, the opera, as it is conducted among us, is but a very humdrum amusement; in other countries, the decorations are entirely magnificent, the singers all excellent, and the burlettas or interludes, quite entertaining; the best poets compose the words, and the best masters the music, but with us it is otherwise; the decorations are but trifling, and cheap; the singers, Matei only excepted, but indifferent. Instead of interlude, we have those sorts of skipping dances, which are calculated for the galleries of the theatre. Every performer

former sings his favourite song, and the music is only a medly of old Italian airs, or some meagre modern Capriccio.

When such is the case, it is not much to be wondered, if the opera is pretty much neglected; the lower orders of people have neither taste nor fortune to relish such an entertainment; they would find more satisfaction in the *Roast Beef of Old England*, than in the finest closes of an eunuch, they sleep amidst all the agony of recitative: On the other hand, people of fortune or taste, can hardly be pleased where there is a visible poverty in the decorations, and an entire want of taste in the composition.

Would it not surprize one, that when Metastasio is so well known in England, and so universally admired, the manager or the composer should have recourse to any other operas than those written by him. I might venture to say, that *written by Metastasio*, put up in the bills of the day, would alone be sufficient to fill an house, since thus, the admirers of sense as well as sound, might find entertainment.

The performers also should be entreated to sing only their parts, without clapping in any of their own favourite airs. I must own, that such songs are generally to me the most disagreeable in the world.

world. Every singer generally chuses a favourite air, not from the excellency of the music, but from the difficulty ; such songs are generally chosen as surprize rather than please, where the performer may shew his compass, his breath, and his volubility.

From hence proceed those unnatural startings, those unmusical closings, and shakes lengthened out to a painful continuance ; such, indeed, may shew a voice, but it must give a truly delicate ear the utmost uneasiness. Such tricks are not music ; neither Corelli nor Pergolesi ever permitted them, and they begin even to be discontinued in Italy, where they first had their rise.

And now I am upon the subject : Our composers also should affect greater simplicity, let their base cliff have all the variety they can give it ; let the body of the music (if I may so express it) be as various as they please, but let them avoid ornamenting a barren ground work ; let them not attempt, by flourishing, to cheat us of solid harmony.

The works of Mr. Rameau are never heard without a surprizing effect. I can attribute it only to this simplicity he every where observes, inso-much, that some of his finest harmonies are often only octave and unison. This simple manner has greater powers than is generally imagined ; and
were

were not such a demonstration misplaced, I think, from the principles of music, it might be proved to be most agreeable.

But to leave general reflection. With the present set of performers, the operas, if the conductor thinks proper, may be carried on with some success, since they have all some merit; if not as actors, at least as singers. Signora Matei is at once both a perfect actress and a very fine singer. She is possessed of a fine sensibility in her manner, and seldom indulges those extravagant and unmusical flights of voice complained of before. Cornacini, on the other hand, is a very indifferent actor; has a most unmeaning face; seems not to feel his part; is infected with a passion of shewing his compass; but to recompence all these defects, his voice is melodious; he has vast compass and great volubility; his swell and shake are perfectly fine, unless that he continues the latter too long. In short, whatever the defects of his action may be, they are amply recompenced by his excellency as a singer; nor can I avoid fancying that he might make a much greater figure in an oratorio, than upon the stage.

However, upon the whole, I know not whether ever operas can be kept up in England; they seem to be entirely exotic, and require the nicest management and care. Instead of this, the care of
them

them is assigned to men unacquainted with the genius and disposition of the people they would amuse, and whose only motives are immediate gain. Whether a discontinuance of such entertainments would be more to the loss or the advantage of the nation, I will not take upon me to determine, since it is as much our interest to induce foreigners of taste among us on the one hand, as it is to discourage those trifling members of society, who generally compose the operatical *dramatis personæ* on the other.



